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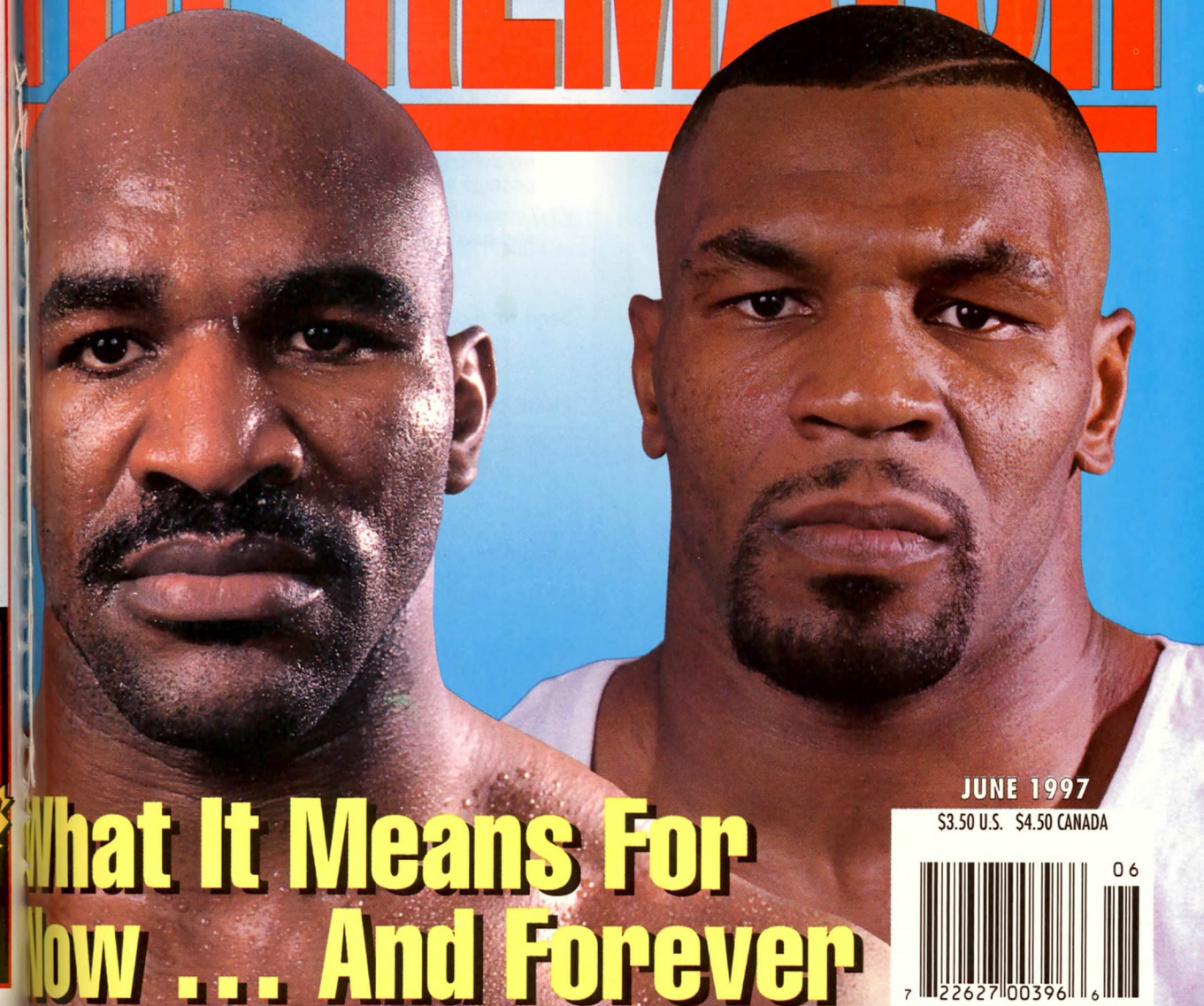

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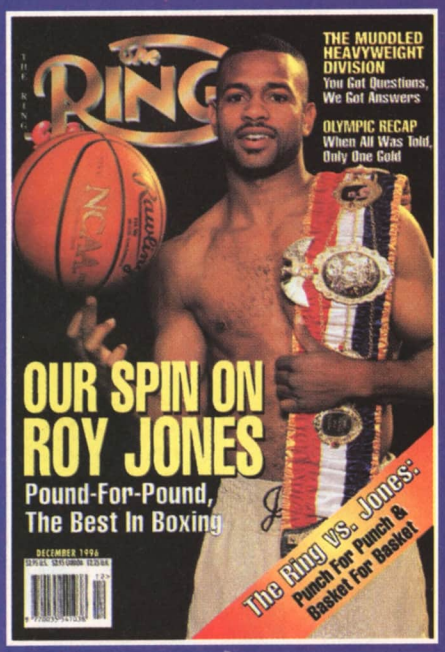

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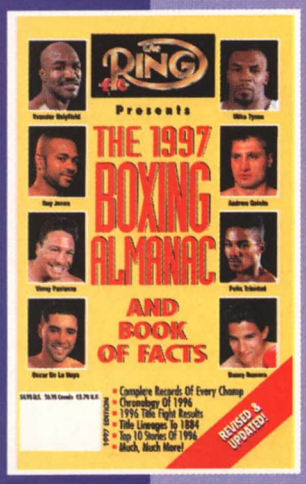

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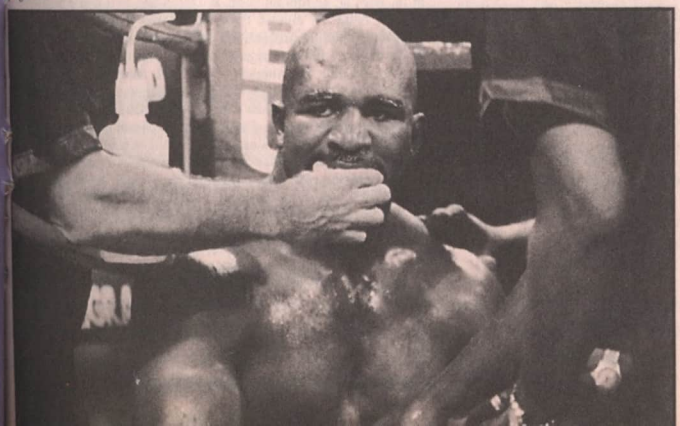

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Holyfield & Tyson by Jason Ross Lavin
On U.K. cover, Hamed-Johnson by Tom Casino/Showtime

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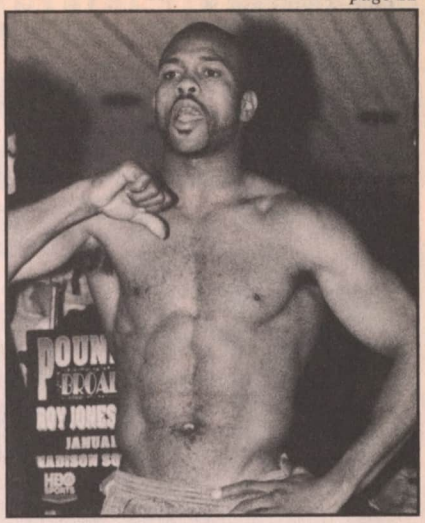

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RINGSIDE

My response to those who ask me what I think of the Holyfield-Tyson rematch: Given how wrong I was the first time, why would anyone *care* what I think? But since 99 percent of us were wrong, we deserve another chance at proving what experts we really are (cough, cough).

I like Tyson on points. Like the rest of us, he played Holyfield cheap last November and wasn't in top mental or physical condition. This time he'll be fueled by hunger and pride, and maybe desperation, too. He'll make some technical adjustments (jab more, lead less often with telegraphed hooks, counter Holyfield's counter rights, pace himself better) and win the favor of the judges with his consistent aggressiveness.

Will Tyson be gun-shy? Can he change *anything* at this point? Will Holyfield continue his pattern of following a great performance with a mediocre one? Was his effort last November the result of divine intervention? There are certainly enough questions to go around, which is why the whole world will be watching on May 3. It's rare that a rematch is as good as the original. One thing's for sure: This rematch will be watched by more people than the original.

Tyson is a 5-2 favorite. We learned last year that the odds don't mean squat. Nor does your opinion or mine. Maybe I'm giving Tyson too much credit. But the human factor is immeasurable. It's what led to Holyfield's victory in the first fight, and I'm guessing it's going to enable Tyson to win the rematch by fairly close decision.

If it doesn't, he's going to fall on his face again.

***

My response to those who asked me what I thought of the Lewis-McCall fight: The fans were ripped off, and if McCall is paid one red cent, it'll be too much. Initially, I felt sorry for Ollie, a likable, albeit mercurial, sort. But when he tried to excuse his bizarre behavior—and secure his $3-million purse—by claiming his non-effort was a strategic ploy, my sympathy turned to anger.

All the finger-pointing was inappropriate. Everyone but McCall, it seems, was blamed for what happened. Postfight testing proved the heavyweight wasn't under the influence of drugs while fighting. Nor did his performance in the first and second rounds suggest an athlete incapable of competing. Sorry if this is insensitive, but simply put, McCall quit, and no one, from promoters Don King and Dino Duva, to HBO, to the Nevada State Athletic Commission, to manager Jimmy Adams, to trainers George Benton and Greg Page, could possibly have known what he was going to do.

I hope McCall gets his life together; his seven children deserve a functioning father. I also hope I don't have to watch any more Atomic Bull____.

Steve Farhood
Editor-in-Chief

Volume 76, No. 6 June 19

The RING

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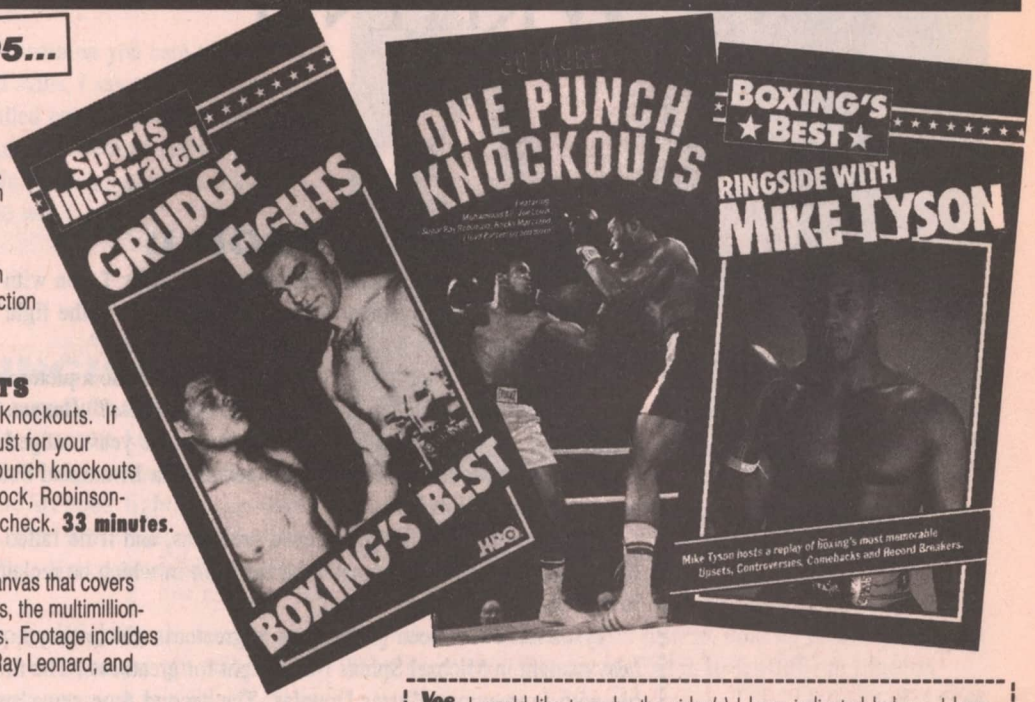

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E MIDDLEWEIGHTS
most skillful and devastating middleweights in the history of boxing are profiled in this [fast]-moving video. Watch stellar performances by Stanley Ketchel, Sugar Ray Robinson, and Marcel [Cer]dan. Also includes Rocky Graziano, Jake LaMotta, Carlos Monzon, and many others. Hosted by [Curt] Gowdy and Floyd Patterson. **58 minutes.**

XING'S GREATEST CHAMPIONS
[Watch] wits with the Boxing Writers of America as they choose the best fighter of all-time from each [divi]sion and then debate who deserves the title of the Greatest Fighter of All-Time. Includes explosive [ring] footage of Henry Armstrong, Benny Leonard, and Roberto Duran in the lightweight division; [welter]weights Barney Ross, Henry Armstrong, and Ray Robinson; middleweights Mickey Walker, [Carlos] Monzon, and Ray Robinson; light heavyweights Bob Fitzsimmons, Billy Conn, and Archie [Moore]; heavyweights Muhammad Ali, Rocky Marciano, and Joe Louis. **60 minutes.**

E HEAVYWEIGHTS: "THE BIG PUNCHERS"
[The] biggest draw in sports today is the heavyweight knockout artist. This hard-hitting video explores [box]ing's most famous punchers. A sample of the action included in this video are clips of Dempsey's [mas]sacre victory over Willard, the second Louis-Schmeling fight, Marciano vs. Walcott, and Frazier vs. [Ali]. **59 minutes.**

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[We've] got a ringside seat for a heart-stopping lineup of boxing's most exciting knockouts, [incl]uding Muhammad Ali-George Foreman, Ezzard Charles-Joe Walcott, Jim Corbett-Bob [Fitz]simmons, Rocky Marciano-Joe Walcott, Sugar Ray Robinson-Rocky Graziano, and many [more]. **30 minutes.**

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[Curt] Gowdy highlights the careers of the sport's finest boxers. Beginning with Jim Corbett, you'll [see] challengers throughout history battle in some of the most striking film coverage ever assembled. [Jack] Johnson displays exquisite defensive skills, Floyd Patterson shows off his peek-a-boo style, Gene [Tunney] demonstrates the scientific approach to boxing, and Muhammad Ali exhibits the skills that [made] him "The Greatest," plus Walcott, Charles, and Louis. **57 minutes.**

YSON AND THE HEAVYWEIGHTS
[With] Mike Tyson as he takes a tour through the history of the heavyweight division. Tyson adds [his] own insight as he analyzes the styles and lives of the men who wore the heavyweight crown [before] him. This fantastic video includes rare footage of Jack Johnson, Jack Dempsey, Joe [Louis], Rocky Marciano, Muhammad Ali, and, of course, Tyson himself. **51 minutes.**

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COME OUT WRITING

We welcome your letters, which may be edited for reasons of space and clarity. Send your comments to Come Out Writing, The Ring, P.O. Box 1148, Ft. Washington, PA 19034

HOLYFIELD-TYSON II

Your November 1991 cover had a picture of Mike Tyson with the caption, "Mike Tyson's Fight For Greatness: Will November 8 Be His Moment?" As the fight with Evander Holyfield failed to come off on that date, it was obviously not his "moment."

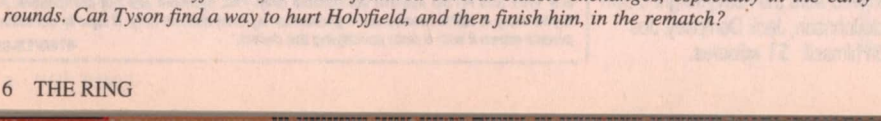
On the cover of your March 1997 issue, there is also a picture of Tyson with the caption reading this time, "Mike Tyson: Can He Reclaim His Greatness?" *Hmmm.* Between those cover dates, Tyson was convicted of rape, sent to prison for three-plus years, staged a comeback, beat up two pugs in McNeeley and Mathis, won titles from cowards in Bruno and Seldon, and was kayoed himself in a one-sided loss to Holyfield.

My question: If he never achieved greatness, and if he failed to win his fight for greatness vs. Holyfield, how could the rematch be the fight in which he reclaims something he never had in the first place?

Tyson has twice been given shots at greatness. (No, a kayo over a blown-up, albeit great, light heavyweight in Michael Spinks isn't a fight for greatness.) The first time came when he was in trouble with journeyman Buster Douglas. The second time came against Holyfield. Twice he failed. Miserably. By knockout!

If Holyfield pushes Tyson in this fight (and we know he will), and if Tyson folds again (recent history gives me no reason to think he won't), the rematch will be the third strike, exploding the myth that was created in our minds by the media. With either a win or loss by Tyson, I believe the following will apply regarding his place in history. A top-10 heavyweight (lower half)? Yes. An all-time great? Please.

JEFF B. HAWKINS
Charlestown, MA



Last November's Holyfield-Tyson bout featured several classic exchanges, especially in the early rounds. Can Tyson find a way to hurt Holyfield, and then finish him, in the rematch?

It's easy to get caught up in the Tyson mystique, but don't be fooled. Mike Tyson is a small, short heavyweight who has enjoyed success largely due to his image. Half the people who have fought him were terrified (i.e. Bruce Seldon and Frank Bruno). Last November, Evander Holyfield not only wasn't scared, he was apparently stronger than Tyson. Every time the two clinched, it was Holyfield who walked his opponent backward. Without the fear factor, Tyson was exposed as just another ordinary fighter.

Can Holyfield do it again, or was he just living a religious dream? My prediction: Not only can he do it again, he'll do it three rounds sooner. Holyfield in eight.

SCOTT M. MEREDITH
San Diego, CA

THE BEST HEAVYS

In your March '97 issue, so-called expert and Managing Editor Nigel Collins listed his top-10 heavyweight champions of all-time. Rocky Marciano was ranked seventh, and I couldn't help but wonder why Collins would deny the best heavyweight in history his rightful place. I agreed with Joe Louis being placed second, but he should have been ranked behind Marciano, and not the overrated Muhammad Ali.

Marciano hit harder than any champion you care to name. As for the morons who say he lacked skills, I say skills are what you make of them. Marciano was skilled enough to know that given his height and reach disadvantages, he couldn't keep a safe distance and set up his opponents. He knew his strengths and weaknesses and did what he had to do to win.

And all he ever did was win.

JOSEPH DiFIORE
Waterbury, CT

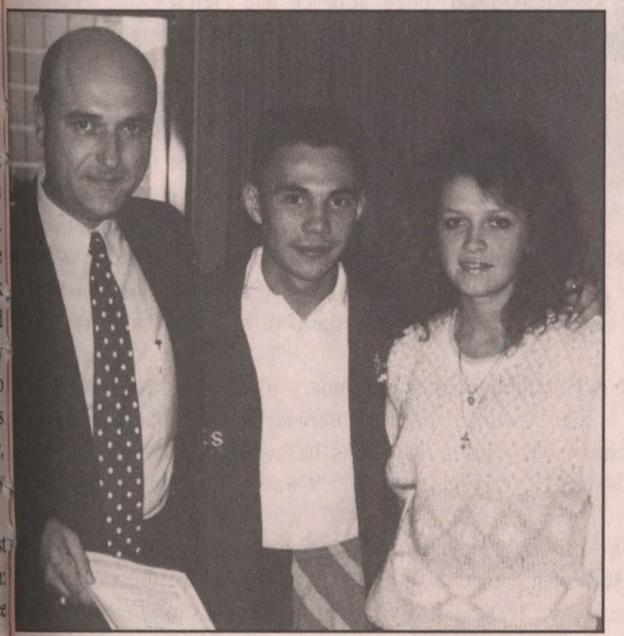
THE McCALL INCIDENT

After watching the WBC heavyweight title fight between Lennox Lewis and Oliver McCall, I heard a lot of angry people voicing opinions. The target of their anger shouldn't have been McCall. Despite the fact that he stopped fighting, he never dropped from a phantom punch, like Bruce Seldon did. And I doubt he'll do any embarrassing Pizza Hut commercials, like Peter McNeeley did.

McCall was trying until he stopped fighting. In fact, he was very much in the fight. Remember, the poor guy got pulled from drug rehab and had to fight a tough opponent in a title fight. In fact, he never belonged in the ring in the first place. Don King probably made him fight so he could collect his share of the proceeds.

Some advice for the Nevada State Athletic Commission: Firstly, a fighter's well-being should always come first. Secondly, don't deny McCall his purse. Instead, hold up King's portion for being dumb enough to put McCall in such a difficult situation.

T. DION
Lawrence, MA



Unbeaten IBF junior welterweight champion Kostya Tszyu is flanked by manager Vlad Warton and wife Natasha. Fans seem to be split; half believe Tszyu to be underrated, and half think he's overrated.

There's never-ending debate regarding the worth of Rocky Marciano, the only heavyweight titlist in history to retire undefeated. In the March '97 issue, Managing Editor Nigel Collins ranked The Rock seventh on his top-10 list of all-time heavyweight champions.

TWO VIEWS ON TSZYU

I was aggravated by two letters that appeared in your January '97 edition ("Tszyu Is Overrated"). Kostya Tszyu's achievements in and out of the ring have not gained him the exposure and recognition he truly deserves.

Tszyu remains unknown not only to fight fans, but to fighters, too. Just ask Julio Cesar Chavez, who considered Tszyu as a possible tuneup opponent following the Mexican's loss to Oscar De La Hoya. After viewing Tszyu's devastating knockout of mandatory challenger Jan Bergman, Chavez swiftly changed his mind. You don't hear him talking about Tszyu anymore.

Overrated? Hardly. Underrated? Yes.

DARREN GALEA
Sydney, Australia

I'm getting sick and tired of all this hype about Tszyu. You guys listed him as the number-one fighter to watch in 1997. We'll watch him, all right—we'll watch him fall down the tubes.

I don't see anything exciting about Tszyu. I see another Tommy Morrison—no heart, chin, defense, or stamina, and with soft skin, too. You call a proposed bout between Oscar De La Hoya and Tszyu a Hagler-Hearns type of matchup. Not even close. How about Tyson-Spinks? De La Hoya will destroy him in 90 seconds.

SERHAN DAYI
Cincinnati, OH ■

ROUND ONE

EIGHTEEN YEARS LATER...

During his reign as WBC welterweight champion, Carlos Palomino promised he'd retire before the age of 30. Sure enough, after dropping a decision to Roberto Duran in 1979, Palomino, then 29, left the ring. Eighteen years later, he's joined the swelling ranks of boxing's Seniors Tour.

"If someone had told me after Duran that I'd fight again at age 47," Palomino told THE RING, "I would've said, 'You're absolutely out of your mind.'"

Palomino's initial motivation wasn't money; he's been a working actor for almost 20 years. Nor was it a need to return to the limelight or regain a world title.

Photo by Tom Hogan

At 47, Palomino is back in the winner's circle

"My father got sick in Christmas 1995," explained Palomino, who lives in Sherman Oaks, California. "He was in the hospital for six months, and I decided to drop everything and stay with him. We hashed out a lot of the problems we'd had, the pain, dating back to my childhood. He died six months ago. I was with him when he took his last breath, and I said goodbye to him.

"Then I went back to the gym, where I had spent a lot of time with my dad. I felt good there, at peace, and I felt a strong sense of him there. I guess it was a healing process. It was very therapeutic."

That alone didn't drive Palomino to lace up the gloves. He started working out, and over the course of two days he sparred six rounds with Hector Camacho. "I did well enough that people were saying to me, 'Why don't you box again?'" he recalled. "I told them I wasn't interested in fighting, but then I heard about the money some of these [older] guys were making. And when Jackie McCoy [Palomino's longtime co-manager] told me he didn't think I had lost anything from my speed or reflexes, I was very encouraged."

After three months of training, Palomino returned on January 10, stopping Ismael Diaz in the eighth round. He scaled 147½, or a half-pound over the welterweight limit. That sounds remarkable until you consider that Palomino, who runs in marathons, has never stopped working out, and his walking-around weight for the last 18 years has been 152. "I was very pleased with my performance," he said.

While he says acting is still his priority, Palomino plans on fighting some more. Wouldn't it be something if, 18 years later, he secured a rematch with the 45-year-old Duran? Palomino is one of boxing's nice guys, and we hope he gets that fight. But only if he promises to re-retire before the age of 50.

– Steve Farhood

STILL THE GREATEST

A previous commitment prevented Muhammad Ali from attending THE RING's 75th anniversary celebration in Atlantic City, so we honored "The Greatest" while he was in New York City in February.

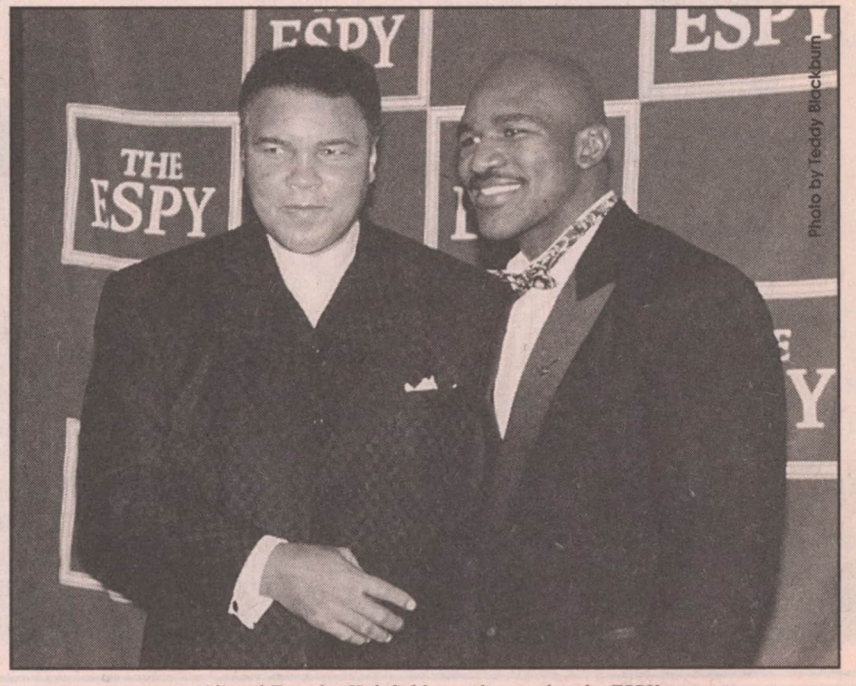
Ali was in the Big Apple for the ESPY Awards, at which he received the Arthur Ashe Award for Courage. But that wasn't the only hardware he came home with. Earlier in the day, Ali received two awards from THE RING at the Pierre Hotel; the "Thrilla In Manila" was chosen as the greatest fight in the magazine's 75 years, and Ali was also presented with a lifetime achievement award.

After the presentations, Editor-in-Chief Steve Farhood spoke with Ali. The ESPY award was okay, he said, but THE RING's lifetime achievement award was "special." Suffering from Parkinson's Syndrome, Ali can't speak as well as he once could. But he still manages to say the right things.

Growing up in Louisville, Ali said he read THE RING religiously and dreamed of being on the cover. He seemed surprised when we told him that dream has been realized almost 80 times. No one else, of course, comes close.

Asked for his most lasting memory of The Thrilla In Manila, Ali didn't hesitate. "Joe's hard left hook," he said. Then he pursed his lips, made a fist, and said he was making a comeback. We thanked him for the exclusive and he smiled.

Look for complete coverage of THE RING's 75th anniversary weekend in next month's issue.



Ali and Evander Holyfield were honored at the ESPYs

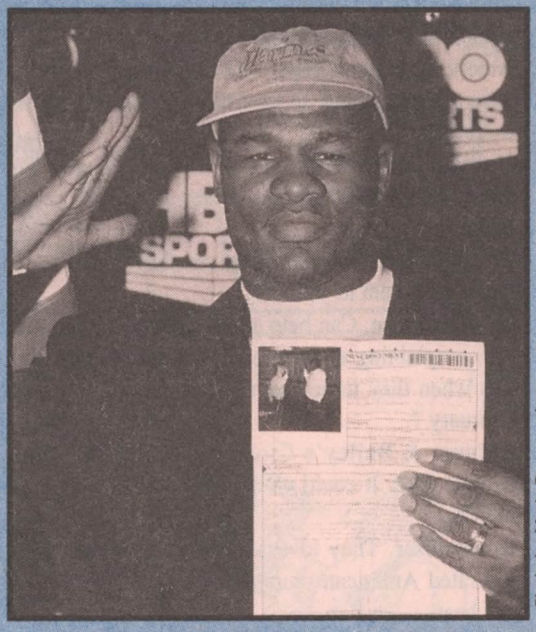
THREE AND OUT

Riddick Bowe's stint in the Marines lasted all of three days. Only 72 hours after beginning boot camp in Parris Island, South Carolina, Bowe was discharged. Reports indicated that Bowe "couldn't handle the regimented training lifestyle." According to Maj. Rick Long, a Marine spokesman at Parris Island, "This was just a case of a recruit who simply refused to train. There were a lot of occasions when he was told to do something and he just said, 'No, I'm not going to do it.'"

Responded Bowe, "Contrary to many media accounts, the physical training was not difficult for me." The problem, Bowe said, was that he missed his family.

We suppose that in the wake of Bowe's two foul-filled fights with Andrew Golota, he couldn't handle the drill instructor breaking his ... Maybe we better let Bowe's manager, Rock Newman, explain. "Once he got there," he said of Bowe, "it was more than he expected."

– Steve Farhood

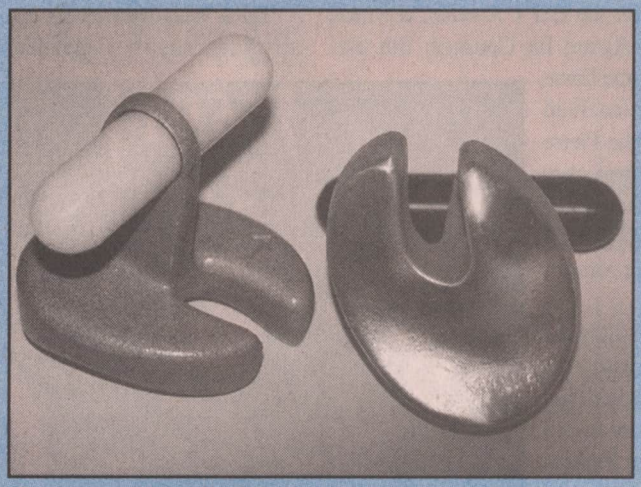


Bowe: Kicked out of boot camp

ALL'S WELL THAT ...

They're funny-looking little things, the new devices developed by Dr. Scott Tunis, an eye surgeon based in Boca Raton, Florida. But they work better than anything else cornermen have ever used, proving that boxing just might be ready for the 21st century.

The major difference between the old device and the new, Dr. Tunis says, is that the Tunis Endswell is constructed to conform to the human skull. "There are four major blood vessels that surround the bones of the eye socket," he explains. "The swelling a fighter experiences is fluid and blood in the soft tissues under the skin. [A cornerman] wants to apply pressure and cold. But the old instrument doesn't fit the bones properly. Moreover, it can be applied only to the upper or lower area at one time. My Endswell is a one-handed instrument that can be applied to the upper and lower areas at the same time."



Boxing's latest invention: The eyes have it

Tunis built a prototype in 1994, and with the advice and suggestions of veteran cutmen Howie Albert and Ace Marotta, perfected it by '95. About 25 pairs of his Endswells are now being used.

"It's the best thing I've ever worked with," says Albert. "And it doesn't push against the eyeball. I was working a fight of [heavyweight] Jeff Wooden's [vs. Ricardo Kennedy in 1996], and after the second round his entire left eye was swollen. The doctor said he was gonna stop it, but I asked for just one round. I couldn't believe how the swelling went down." Wooden went on to win a 10-round decision.

Handlers interested in purchasing the Tunis Endswell can do so by contacting Dr. Tunis at (561) 997-2757, or writing him at 301 Yamato Road, Suite 3190, Boca Raton, FL 33431. A pair of Endswells (one for each eye) costs $99.

THE 10 CAREER OPTIONS FOR OLIVER McCALL

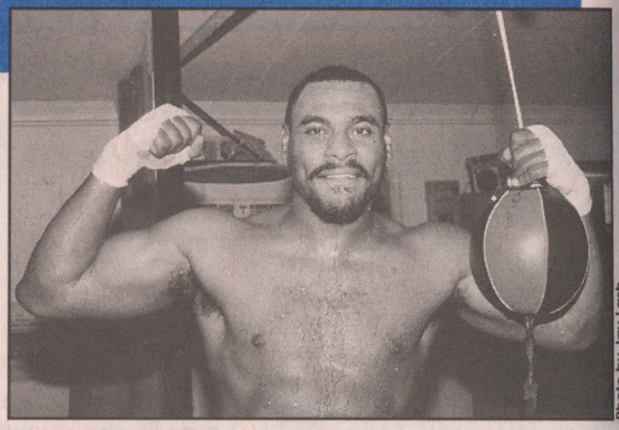


Photo by Jay Lash

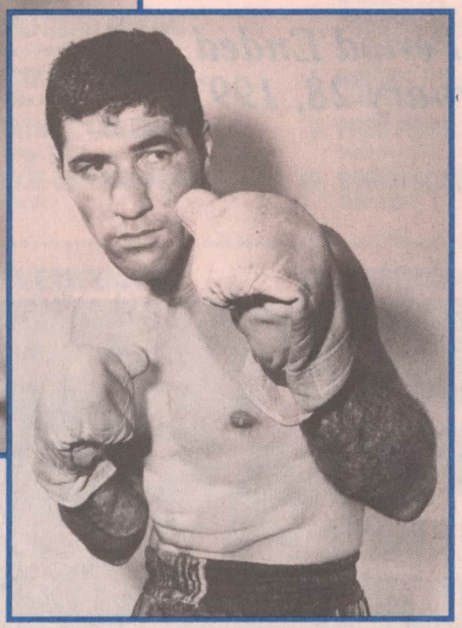
McCall: Playing opposite Susan Lucci?

10. *All My Children*. The way he can summon tears, Ollie's got a shot at marrying Susan Lucci.
9. America's Patient: HBO's George Foreman says we all have a responsibility to save this troubled millionaire, uh, troubled *soul*.
8. Hollywood. How about the lead in *The Joe Walcott Story*? Seems McCall's got Jersey Joe's walkaway move down pat.
7. Christmas tree salesman. If he can throw 'em, he can certainly carry 'em to your car.
6. TV Repairman. Can help answer all the calls from viewers complaining of the stench that emanated from their sets when they turned on a certain premium channel on February 7.
5. Barnum & Bailey's Circus. Special attraction: The Atomic Bull. It could work–side-show by day, rehab by night.
4. House loser. They love McCall in England. Finally, a top-rated American more than one British heavyweight can beat.
3. Consumer advocate. You know, protecting the average Joe from ripoffs, like the guy who shells out hundreds of dollars to see a competitive heavyweight title fight and goes home feeling like he's been pickpocketed.
2. Strategist. McCall's ad in THE RING: "You, too, can master the Pep-like fight plan I used against Lennox Lewis. Just call me, with credit card in hand, at 1-800-DEFENSE."
1. Undercards. The former champ creates his own niche: "King Of The Two-Rounders."

OUTSIDE THE ROPES

Photo by Al Bello/Allsport

Norton Jr.: Born to hit



Harrington: Former middleweight contender

Teresa Tapia, the wife of undefeated junior bantamweight **Johnny Tapia**, plans to apply for a manager's license in New Mexico. Her goal is to help guide her husband's career ... U.S. District Judge **Lawrence McKenna** refused to dismiss insurance-fraud charges against **Don King**, clearing the way for a second trial. In November 1995, a jury in the case could not reach a verdict. As we went to press, a date had not been set for the retrial ... Hawaiian-born former middleweight contender **Stan Harrington**, 63, died in Orlando, Florida. A huge draw on the island, Harrington, who fought from 1953 to '67, compiled a record of 64-18-3 (26). He is perhaps best remembered for twice outpointing a faded **Sugar Ray Robinson** ... **Leon Gast's** long-awaited documentary on "The Rumble In The Jungle," *When We Were Kings*, was nominated for an Academy Award ... San Francisco 49ers linebacker **Ken Norton Jr.'s** application to compete in the Dallas Golden Gloves was rejected by USA Boxing. According to the organization's rules, professional athletes are ineligible to participate as amateurs. Norton, the son of former heavyweight champion **Ken Norton**, has never boxed ... A federal court judge has thrown out a $4.4-million award a jury returned against **Mike Tyson** last September for unjustly firing his former trainer, **Kevin Rooney**. U.S. District Court Judge **Thomas McAvoy** ruled the judgment was improper because Rooney failed to prove Tyson had a contractual agreement with him.

THE PUNCHLINES

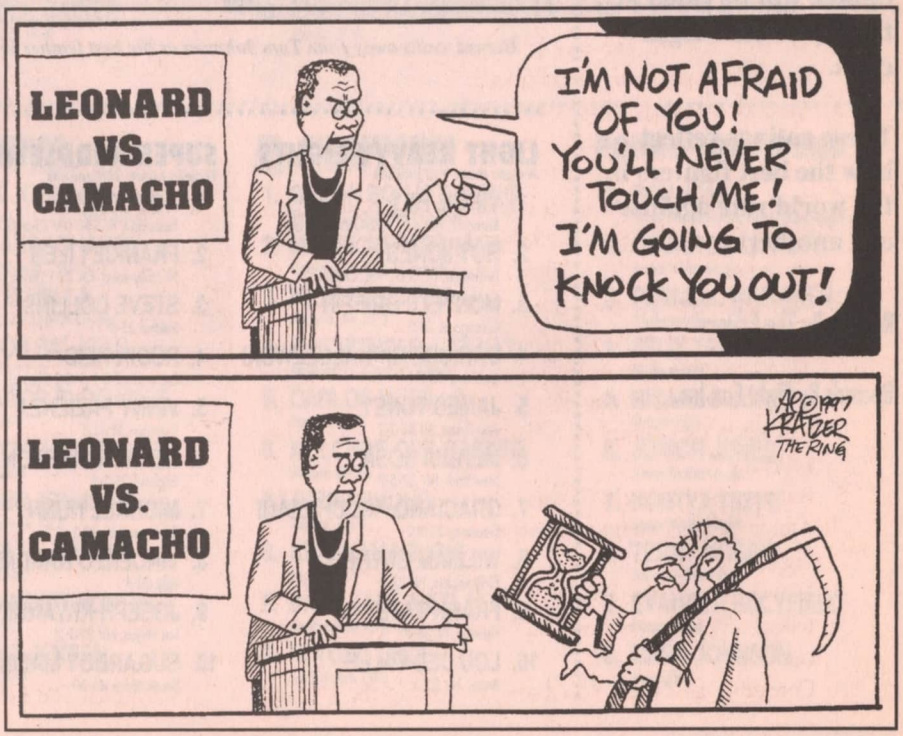
"In the first fight, I hit him below the belt four times. The second fight, I did it only two times. I make progress."

– Andrew Golota on his fights with Riddick Bowe, as quoted in *The New York Times*

"A lot of people I was mad at, I'd get knocked out under their names and send them the clippings."

– Bruce "The Mouse" Strauss, former legendary loser, as quoted in the New York *Daily News*.

AL KRATZER'S VIEW



THE RING RATINGS

For Period Ended February 28, 1997

How Our Ratings Are Compiled

In each division, fighters are ranked according to their abilities and accomplishments.

Being champion does not necessarily mean a fighter will be rated at the top of his weight class.

These ratings reflect how the best fighters in the world rate against one another.

Ratings By The Editors

Records By Fight Fax Inc.

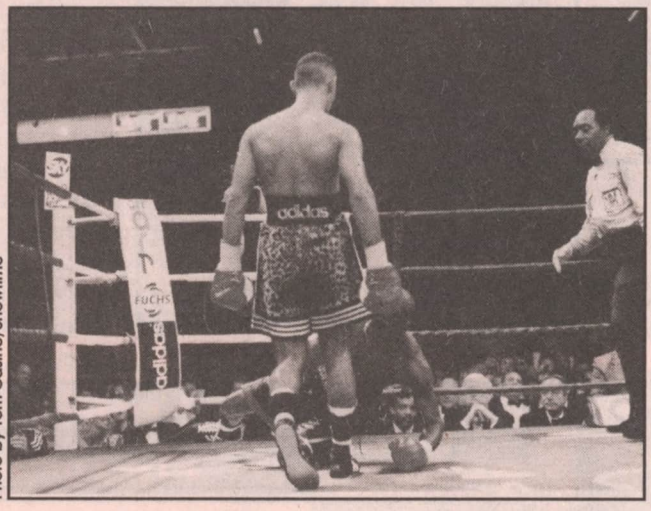


Photo by Tom Casino/Showtime

Hamed walks away from Tom Johnson as the best feather in the world

HEAVYWEIGHTS
Weight Unlimited

1. EVANDER HOLYFIELD
Fairburn, GA *33-3 (WBA Champ)*
2. LENNOX LEWIS
England *30-1 (WBC Champ)*
3. MIKE TYSON
Southington, OH *45-2*
4. MICHAEL MOORER
Detroit, MI *37-1 (IBF Champ)*
5. ANDREW GOLOTA
Chicago, IL *28-2*
6. RAY MERCER
West Orange, NJ *24-4-1*
7. HENRY AKINWANDE
England *31-0-1*
8. DAVID TUA
Totowa, NJ *26-0*
9. RIDDICK BOWE
Fort Washington, MD *40-1*
10. TIM WITHERSPOON
Philadelphia, PA *45-5*

CRUISERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 190 pounds

1. NATE MILLER
Philadelphia, PA *29-4 (WBA Champ)*
2. ADOLPHO WASHINGTON
Lexington, KY *26-3-2 (IBF Champ)*
3. MARCELO DOMINGUEZ
Argentina *21-1-1 (WBC Champ)*
4. FABRICE TIOZZO
France *34-1*
5. KENNY KEENE
Emmett, ID *37-1*
6. CARL THOMPSON
England *20-4*
7. DAVID IZEQWIRE
Washington, D.C. *19-1*
8. TORSTEN MAY
Germany *16-1*
9. ALEXANDER GUROV
Ukraine *18-2-1*
10. YOSUKEZAN NISHIJIMA
Japan *17-1*

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS
Weight limit: 175 pounds

1. VIRGIL HILL
Bismarck, ND *43-1 (WBA/IBF Champ)*
2. ROY JONES
Pensacola, FL *34-0 (WBC Champ)*
3. MONTELL GRIFFIN
Chicago, IL *26-0*
4. DARIUSZ MICHALCZEWSKI
Germany *32-0-1*
5. JAMES TONEY
Ann Arbor, MI *54-3-2*
6. MERQUI SOSA
New York, NY *27-5-2*
7. GRACIANO ROCCHIGIANI
Germany *38-3-2*
8. WILLIAM GUTHRIE
Philadelphia, PA *22-0*
9. FRANK TATE
Houston, TX *36-4*
10. LOU DEL VALLE
Bronx, NY *23-1*

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 168 pounds

1. ROY JONES
Pensacola, FL *34-0 (IBF Champ)*
2. FRANKIE LILES
N. Hollywood, CA *29-1 (WBA Champ)*
3. STEVE COLLINS
Ireland *35-3*
4. ROBIN REID
England *22-0-1 (WBC Champ)*
5. VINNY PAZIENZA
Cranston, RI *41-6*
6. HENRY WHARTON
England *25-2-1*
7. MICHAEL NUNN
Davenport, IA *50-3*
8. VINCENZO NARDIELLO
Italy *30-6*
9. JOSEPH KIWANUKA
Las Vegas, NV *23-1-2*
10. SUGARBOY MALINGA
South Africa *41-10*

MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 160 pounds

1. BERNARD HOPKINS
Philadelphia, PA *30-2-1 (IBF Champ)*
2. KEITH HOLMES
Washington, D.C. *29-1 (WBC Champ)*
3. WILLIAM JOPPY
Washington, D.C. *23-0-1 (WBA Champ)*
4. LONNIE BRADLEY
New York, NY *25-0*
5. JORGE CASTRO
Argentina *101-5-2*
6. QUINCY TAYLOR
Dallas, TX *26-4*
7. DANA ROSENBLATT
Malden, MA *29-1*
8. OTIS GRANT
Canada *28-1*
9. JOHN DAVID JACKSON
Seattle, WA *35-2*
10. ROBERT McCRACKEN
England *28-0*

JR. MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 154 pounds

1. **TERRY NORRIS**
   Mission Valley, CA *45-6 (WBC/IBF Champ)*
2. **LAURENT BOUDOUANI**
   France *34-2 (WBA Champ)*
3. **JULIO CESAR VASQUEZ**
   Argentina *56-3*
4. **WINKY WRIGHT**
   St. Petersburg, FL *36-1*
5. **CARL DANIELS**
   St. Louis, MO *37-2*
6. **BRONCO McKART**
   Monroe, MI *31-2*
7. **HECTOR CAMACHO**
   Orlando, FL *63-3*
8. **RAUL MARQUEZ**
   Houston, TX *25-0*
9. **EMMETT LINTON**
   Tacoma, WA *22-2*
10. **ANTHONY STEPHENS**
    Shreveport, LA *28-7-2*

WELTERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 147 pounds

1. **PERNELL WHITAKER**
   Norfolk, VA *40-1-1 (WBC Champ)*
2. **FELIX TRINIDAD**
   Puerto Rico *31-0 (IBF Champ)*
3. **IKE QUARTEY**
   Ghana *33-0 (WBA Champ)*
4. **JOSE LUIS LOPEZ**
   Mexico *37-3-1*
5. **OBA CARR**
   Detroit, MI *37-2*
6. **PATRICK CHARPENTIER**
   France *24-4*
7. **WILFREDO RIVERA**
   Puerto Rico *22-2-1*
8. **YORI BOY CAMPAS**
   Mexico *65-2*
9. **PATRICK COLEMAN**
   Chicago, IL *25-5*
10. **JOSE LUIS NAVARRO**
    Spain *22-1*

JR. WELTERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 140 pounds

1. **OSCAR DE LA HOYA**
   Whittier, CA *23-0 (WBC Champ)*
2. **KOSTYA TSZYU**
   Australia *18-0-1 (IBF Champ)*
3. **KHALID RAHILOU**
   France *29-2 (WBA Champ)*
4. **JULIO CESAR CHAVEZ**
   Mexico *97-2-1*
5. **MIGUEL ANGEL GONZALEZ**
   Mexico *41-1*
6. **CHARLES MURRAY**
   Rochester, NY *38-3*
7. **FRANKIE RANDALL**
   Warren, OH *53-5-1*
8. **RAFAEL RUELAS**
   Studio City, CA *48-3*
9. **FRED PENDLETON**
   Miami, FL *41-21-4*
10. **SOREN SONDERGAARD**
    Denmark *29-1*

LIGHTWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 135 pounds

1. **ORZUBEK NAZAROV**
   Japan *23-0 (WBA Champ)*
2. **PHILLIP HOLIDAY**
   South Africa *30-0 (IBF Champ)*
3. **STEVE JOHNSTON**
   Denver, CO *20-0*
4. **GEORGE SCOTT**
   Pembroke Pines, FL *31-1*
5. **JEAN-BAPTISTE MENDY**
   France *49-5-2 (WBC Champ)*
6. **SHANE MOSLEY**
   Pomona, CA *22-0*
7. **IVAN ROBINSON**
   Delran, NJ *23-1*
8. **JOHN-JOHN MOLINA**
   Puerto Rico *40-4*
9. **LEAVANDER JOHNSON**
   Atlantic City, NJ *26-1-1*
10. **ARTUR GRIGORJAN**
    Uzbekistan *22-0*

JR. LIGHTWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 130 pounds

1. **AZUMAH NELSON**
   Ghana *39-3-2 (WBC Champ)*
2. **ARTURO GATTI**
   Jersey City, NJ *25-1 (IBF Champ)*
3. **GENARO HERNANDEZ**
   Los Angeles, CA *34-1-1*
4. **YONG SOO CHOI**
   South Korea *22-2 (WBA Champ)*
5. **ROBERT GARCIA**
   Oxnard, CA *27-0*
6. **JULIEN LORCY**
   France *34-0*
7. **TRACY PATTERSON**
   Highland, NY *57-5-1*
8. **GABE RUELAS**
   Arleta, CA *44-3*
9. **ANATOLY ALEXANDROV**
   Kazakhstan *30-3*
10. **ANGEL MANFREDY**
    Gary, IN *20-2-1*

FEATHERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 126 pounds

1. **NASEEM HAMED**
   England *25-0 (IBF Champ)*
2. **LUISITO ESPINOSA**
   Philippines *40-7 (WBC Champ)*
3. **TOM JOHNSON**
   Detroit, MI *45-3-1*
4. **WILFREDO VAZQUEZ**
   Puerto Rico *49-7-3 (WBA Champ)*
5. **KEVIN KELLEY**
   Flushing, NY *46-1-2*
6. **EVER BELENO**
   Colombia *34-2*
7. **WELCOME NCITA**
   South Africa *40-2*
8. **JUAN MANUEL MARQUEZ**
   Mexico *19-1*
9. **MANUEL MEDINA**
   Mexico *52-8*
10. **DERRICK GAINER**
    Pensacola, FL *18-4*

JR. FEATHERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 122 pounds

1. **JUNIOR JONES**
   Brooklyn, NY *42-2*
2. **DANIEL ZARAGOZA**
   Mexico *54-7-3 (WBC Champ)*
3. **VUYANI BUNGU**
   South Africa *31-2 (IBF Champ)*
4. **MARCO ANTONIO BARRERA**
   Mexico *43-1*
5. **ANTONIO CERMENO**
   Venezuela *25-1 (WBA Champ)*
6. **WAYNE McCULLOUGH**
   Las Vegas, NV *20-1*
7. **KENNEDY McKINNEY**
   Memphis, TN *30-2-1*
8. **ERIK MORALES**
   Mexico *25-0*
9. **ORLANDO CANIZALES**
   Laredo, TX *43-3-1*
10. **ENRIQUE SANCHEZ**
    Mexico *20-0*

BANTAMWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 118 pounds

1. **MBULELO BOTILE**
   South Africa *21-0 (IBF Champ)*
2. **JORGE ELIECER JULIO**
   Colombia *35-1*
3. **DAORUNG C. SIRIWAT**
   Thailand *58-5-1 (WBA Champ)*
4. **SIRIMONGKOL SINGMANASUK**
   Thailand *13-0 (WBC Champ)*
5. **NANA KONADU**
   Ghana *36-3*
6. **PAULIE AYALA**
   Ft. Worth, TX *19-0*
7. **ANCEE GEDEON**
   Westminster, CA *14-8-1*
8. **VEERAPHOL SAHAPROM**
   Thailand *9-1*
9. **ROBBIE REGAN**
   Wales *17-2-3*
10. **PASTOR MAURIN**
    Argentina *33-0*

JR. BANTAMWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 115 pounds

1. **JOHNNY TAPIA**
   Albuquerque, NM *38-0-2*
2. **DANNY ROMERO**
   Albuquerque, NM *29-1 (IBF Champ)*
3. **GERRY PENALOSA**
   Philippines *35-1-1 (WBC Champ)*
4. **HIROSHI KAWASHIMA**
   Japan *20-3-1*
5. **YOKTHAI SITHOAR**
   Thailand *12-0 (WBA Champ)*
6. **HYUNG CHUL LEE**
   South Korea *19-6*
7. **ALIMI GOITIA**
   Venezuela *15-1*
8. **HAROLD GREY**
   Colombia *21-2*
9. **LUIS BOLANO**
   Colombia *23-0*
10. **POLO SAUCEDO**
    Houston, TX *12-3-1*

FLYWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 112 pounds

1. **MARK JOHNSON**
   Washington, D.C. *30-1 (IBF Champ)*
2. **YURI ARBACHAKOV**
   Japan *23-0 (WBC Champ)*
3. **JOSE BONILLA**
   Venezuela *22-3 (WBA Champ)*
4. **CARLOS SALAZAR**
   Argentina *43-7-2*
5. **SAEN SOR PLOENCHIT**
   Thailand *26-1*
6. **CHATCHAI ELITE-GYM**
   Thailand *24-1*
7. **ARTHUR JOHNSON**
   East St. Louis, IL *13-3*
8. **ALBERTO JIMENEZ**
   Mexico *32-4-3*
9. **ALEJANDRO MONTIEL**
   Mexico *33-3*
10. **JESPER JENSEN**
    Denmark *20-0*

JR. FLYWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 108 pounds

1. **SAMAN SORJATURONG**
   Thailand *33-2-1 (WBC Champ)*
2. **MAURICIO PASTRANA**
   Colombia *16-0 (IBF Champ)*
3. **MICHAEL CARBAJAL**
   Phoenix, AZ *43-3*
4. **PHICHITNOI C. SIRIWAT**
   Thailand *17-1 (WBA Champ)*
5. **CARLOS MURILLO**
   Panama *31-3*
6. **MELCHOR COB CASTRO**
   Mexico *48-5-4*
7. **JESUS CHONG**
   Mexico *30-7*
8. **KEIJI YAMAGUCHI**
   Japan *20-2*
9. **BABY JAKE MATLALA**
   South Africa *45-10-2*
10. **HI YONG CHOI**
    South Korea *19-2*

POUND-FOR-POUND

1. **ROY JONES**
   Super Middleweight/Light Heavyweight
2. **OSCAR DE LA HOYA**
   Junior Welterweight
3. **PERNELL WHITAKER**
   Welterweight
4. **FELIX TRINIDAD**
   Welterweight
5. **RICARDO LOPEZ**
   Strawweight
6. **JUNIOR JONES**
   Junior Featherweight
7. **KOSTYA TSZYU**
   Junior Welterweight
8. **TERRY NORRIS**
   Junior Middleweight
9. **EVANDER HOLYFIELD**
   Heavyweight
10. **MARK JOHNSON**
    Flyweight

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Oct. 1984: The Beast From The East: John Mugabi Strikes Terror Into The Hearts Of Men. Plus: Olympics, Bill Costello, Davey Moore, Wilfred Benitez, King's heavyweights.

Dec. 1984: Hagler Hammers Hamsho. Plus: Barry McGuigan, boxing's best, James Broad, Julian Jackson, Pinklon Thomas.

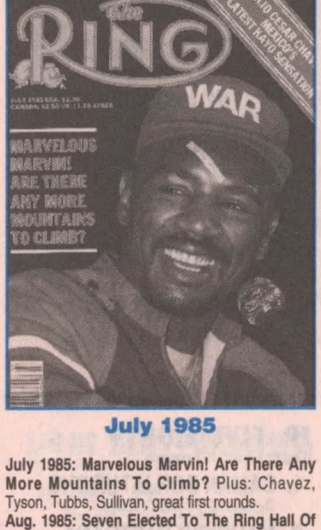
Jan. 1985: Holmes-Bonecrusher Color Action. Plus: Gerry Cooney, pro debuts (Breland, Hill, Taylor, Biggs, Whitaker, Holyfield), Santos-Medal, Meza-Garza.

Feb. 1985: Showdown: Page Clobbers Coetzee For WBA Title. Plus: Larry Holmes, lightweights, Cooney-Chaplin, McCallum-Minchillo.

April 1985: Special Hagler-Hearns Program. Plus: British fighters, Hector Camacho, Donald Curry, Sonny Liston.

May 1985: The Rematch In Reno: Bramble-Mancini Color Action. Plus: Donald Curry, Aaron Pryor, McGuigan-LaPorte.

June 1985: Holmes' Last Hurrah? Holmes-Bey Color Action. Plus: Holmes vs. all-time greats, Paul-Arroyo, 1901.



July 1985

July 1985: Marvelous Marvin! Are There Any More Mountains To Climb? Plus: Chavez, Tyson, Tubbs, Sullivan, great first rounds.

Aug. 1985: Seven Elected To The Ring Hall Of Fame (Jose Napoles, Jake LaMotta, Panama Al Brown, Manuel Ortiz, Young Stribling, Thomas Jackling, Lord Lonsdale). Plus: Spinks-Holmes preview, Barry McGuigan.

Sept. 1985: Barry McGuigan: Can He Be Boxing's Savior? Plus: Truth Williams, Tyrell Biggs, Greg Richardson, Julio Cesar Chavez, Paul-Blake, Witherspoon-Bonecrusher, Berbick-Bey, Pinklon Thomas.

Oct. 1985: The "Macho Man" Rides Again. Plus: Jeff Fenech, Berbick-Green, John E. Garcia, Dwight Muhammad Qawi, McCallum-Braxton.

Nov. 1985: Will Hagler Feast On The Beast? Plus: Hagler-Mugabi & Hearns-Shuler previews, Lonnie Smith, Pintor-Meza, Chuck Hull, Benitez-Moley.

Dec. 1985: Michael Spinks: Against All Odds. Plus: Curry-McCrory preview, McGuigan-Taylor, Alexis Arguello, Michael Olajide, Chavez-Pratchett.

Jan. 1986: In Search Of A Heavyweight Champion. Plus: Azumah Nelson, Arguello-Jefferson, Olympic update, Chicago boxing.

Feb. 1986: Mike Tyson: The Legacy Of Cus D'Amato. Plus: Rocky IV, Curry-McCrory, Teddy Mann, Kenny Lane.

March 1986 (Awards Issue): Co-Fighters Of The Year: Marvelous Marvin Hagler & Donald Curry. Plus: Ring's Annual Awards, Evander Holyfield, Williamson-Muhammad, Camacho-Roach, 1985 boxing diary.

April 1986: Witherspoon Tames Tubbs For WBA Title. Plus: Dream fights, Greg Haugen, Tyrell Biggs, Mark Breland, Paul Gonzales, HBO tourney, Witherspoon-Tubbs, Frank Warren, Gene Tunney.

May 1986: Marvelous Marvin Tames The Beast. Plus: Hearns-Shuler, Mike Tyson, Bramble-Crawley, Sandoval-Canizales, Marvin Johnson, McGuigan-Cabrera, Arguello-Costello, Weaver-Williams.

June 1986: Barry's Back In The USA: McGuigan Breathes A Breath Of Fresh Air Into American Fight Scene. Plus: Bobby Czyz, Robbie Sims, Qawi-Holyfield preview, Berbick-Thomas, Bruno-Coetzee.

July 1986: Spinks-Holmes II: Who Really Won? Plus: Frank Bruno, Richie Sandoval, Kevin Watts, Tyson-Tillis, Boza-Edwards-Alli, Johnson-Burns.

Aug. 1986: Is Sugar Ray Still Sweet? Plus: Lloyd Honeyghan, Tyson-Green, Cooney-Gregg, Hall of Fame (Eder Jofre, Benny Lynch, Bud Taylor, Sam McVey, Nat Langham, John Chambers), Bernardo Pinango.

Sept. 1986: Gerry Cooney vs. Mike Tyson: Who Would Win? Plus: Cruz-McGuigan, Hearns-Medal, Tyson-Gross, Sims-Duran.

Dec. 1986: The Weekend That Shook The Boxing World. Rosario-Bramble & Honeyghan-Curry. Plus: Butch Lewis interview, Buster Drayton, Hector Camacho, Jake LaMotta.

April 1987: Hagler-Leonard Souvenir Issue. Plus: Czyz, Orlando Canizales, Mugabi-Thomas, Biggs-Snipes, Chavez-LaPorte, Bonecrusher-Witherspoon II, Haugen-Paul.

May 1987: Mike Tyson: Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Year-end awards, *The Ring* annual ratings, Louie Espinoza, Herol Graham.

June 1987: Vinny Paz: Phenom Or Phony? Plus: Tyson-Bonecrusher, Mark Breland, Brian Mitchell, Holyfield, Czyz-Edwards, Olajide-Lee, Curry-Montgomery.

July 1987: Spinks-Cooney: The Fight That Refused To Die. Plus: The new *Ring* ratings, Terry Marsh, George Foreman's return, Khaosai Galaxy, Hearns-Andries, Whitaker-Mayweather.

Aug. 1987: Sugar Ray: Still In Style. Plus: Leonard-Hagler, all-time heavyweight ratings, Czyz-MacDonald, Camacho-Davis.

Sept. 1987: Michael Olajide: The Look Of The Future? Plus: Tyson-Thomas, Jeff Fenech, middleweight muddle, Tsuyoshi Hamada, Juan Roldan, Harold Knight.

Nov. 1987: Tyson Wins Heavyweight Triple Crown. Plus: McCallum-Curry, Carlos Monzon interview, triple champions, Orlin & Terry Norris, Ramirez-Alli, Fenech-Richardson, Matthew Hilton.

Dec. 1987: Spinks & Lewis: Boxing's Beastie Boys. Plus: Starling-Breland, Ramzi Hassan, Honeyghan-Hatcher, Holyfield-Ocasio.

Jan. 1988: Darrin Van Horn-Million Dollar Baby? Plus: Evander Holyfield, Hill-Stewart, Juan Coggi, great hookers, AIDS.

Feb. 1988: Gold Outshines Glitter: Tate Tops Olajide. Plus: Tyson-Biggs, Kalambay-Barkley, Hearns-Roldan, fights we'd like to see.

March 1988: Thomas "Hit Man" Hearns: "Now I Own History." Plus: Rocky Lockridge & Roger Mayweather, Panama, Tony Burton, Chavez-Rosario, Gervacio-Espinoza, Vaca-Honeyghan.

April 1988: Evander Holyfield: Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Special year-end awards, Holyfield-Qawi II, Foreman-Sekorski, Hill-Angulo.

May 1988: George Foreman: "I Can Beat Tyson." Plus: Tyson-Holmes, Jesse Benavides, Showtime, no-knockout artists.

Aug. 1988: Julio Cesar Chavez: The Kid From Culiacan. Plus: Holyfield, bad decisions, Lockridge-Knight, Starling-Breland II, Brown-Trice, Haugen-Santana.

Sept. 1988: Sugar Ray: Here He Comes Again. Plus: Andries-Czyz, Kid Chocolate, Don Dunphy, Don Lalonde.

Oct. 1988: Mike Tyson: What Price Glory? Plus: Tyson-Spinks, Hearns-Barkley, Davey Moore.

Nov. 1988: Donny Lalonde: "Sugar Ray Is Out Of His Mind!" Plus: Hall of Fame selections (Carlos Ortiz, Joe Brown, Billy Graham, Ike Williams, D'Amato, Jimmy Jacobs), Nunn-Tate, Mosley-Starling, Honeyghan-Chung, '88 Olympians.

Jan. 1989: Meldrick Taylor: Philly Phenom. Plus: Marvin Hagler, Alex Wallau, Taylor-Lee, Olympic results.

Feb. 1989: Julio Cesar Chavez. Plus: Chavez-Ramirez, all-time lightweight ratings, Espinoza, Simon Brown, Roger Mayweather.

March 1989: Hearns Next For Sugar Ray? Plus: Leonard-Lalonde, Prince Charles Williams, Hearns-Kinchen, Nunn-Roldan, Hines-Hilton.

May 1989: The Best Of '88. Plus: Year-end awards, Evander Holyfield, Pryor-Moore, Fenech-Navarro.

Jan. 1990: Boxing's Bible Reborn At Age 60. Plus: Carlos Monzon, Mike Tyson, Leonard-Duran, Daniel Zaragoza, Nunn-Barkley, Whitaker-Ramirez, George Foreman (color).

Feb. 1990: Mike Tyson: Riddick Bowe & Mercer Take Aim. Plus: Bobby Czyz, Gerry Cooney, Chuck Wepner, Antonio Esparragoza, Roman-Laciar.

March 1990: The '80s—Great Fights, Great Fighters (color). Plus: Jeff Harding, Evander Holyfield, Pete Rademacher, Sharkey-McCoy.

April 1990: Pernell Whitaker: Fighter Of The Year (color). Plus: Tiger Flowers, Duran-Leonard, Chavez-Taylor preview, Jorge Paez, Ali-Cooper.

May 1990: Big George Talks Tough: "It Won't Be That Difficult!" Plus: Ed Hopson, Russian fighters, grudge wars, Archie Moore, Berg, Marcel Cerdan, Chavez-Cortes.

June 1990: Buster! How James Douglas Shocked The World. Plus: Michael Moorer, Camacho-Paez, Tommy Farr, Excuses, Tiger, Ruben Olivares-Jeff Chandler.

July 1990: "I'm Hungrier Than Ever Before." Is Evander Holyfield. Plus: James Toney, Buddy McGirt, Glenwood Brown, Aaron Davis, Michael Carbajal, Jorge Paez, Kid Gavilan, Mark Breland, Ali-Liston II (color).

Aug. 1990: Chavez: His Greatness Confirmed ... Is He The Best Mexican Fighter Ever? Plus: Matthew Saad Muhammad, John L. Sullivan, Mike Tyson, Michael Nunn, Mark Breland, Harold Johnson, Cus D'Amato, Louis-Godoy (color).

Sept. 1990: Marvin Hagler-Can He Resist The Irresistible Temptation? Plus: Thomas Hearns, Sanchez-Saddler, Paul Banke, puncher vs. chin, Beau Jack, Robinson-LaMotta (color).

Oct. 1990: Rocky Graziano—Thanks For The Memories. Plus: Aaron Pryor, Junior Jones, Mike Tyson, Chris Eubank, Wolgast-Nelson, Hall of Fame.

Nov. 1990: Tyson vs. Foreman. Can Iron Mike Stop The Blast From The Past? Plus: Bruno, Seldon, best chins, Sullivan-Kilrain (color), Azumah Nelson, LaStarza.

Dec. 1990: Exclusive Annual Report: The State Of The Game. Plus: Douglas-Holyfield preview, Julio Cesar Chavez, Joe Grim, Whitaker-Nazario, Rosi-Van Horn, Benny Leonard, Douglas-Tyson (color).

Jan. 1991: Boxing's Baddest Bad Boy: Nigel Benn Plays By His Own Rules. Plus: Roberto Duran, Kid Akeem, Jose Napoles, Jimmy Carruthers, LaMotta-Zale, Dempsey-Willard (color).

Feb. 1991: Boxing On TV—Now You'll Pay. Plus: Ismael Laguna, Tommy Morrison in *Rocky V*, Reggie Tuur, Chiquita Gonzalez, Harold Green, Joe Louis.

March 1991: Hunger! It Made Evander

Champ, But ... Plus: Dempsey-Firpo, Charles Murray, Khaosai Galaxy, Nunn-Curry, Henry Armstrong, Sonny Liston (color).

April 1991: Julio Cesar Chavez—Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Tyson-Stewart, James Leija, Wilfred Benitez, Pedro Decima, Moore-Bassey.

May 1991: Ali-Frazier I: 20 Years Late, Still The Fight Of The Century (color). Plus: fighting at home, Mark McPherson, George Costner, Rolando Pascua, Tony Canzoneri.

June 1991: Pain, Frustration, Confidence, And Hope: Meldrick Taylor's Life After Chavez. Plus: Foreman-Holyfield preview, Norris-Leonard, David Kamau, Freddie Steele, Bennie Briscoe, Leonard's career (color).

July 1991: Tyson's Title Hopes: He Ain't What He Used To Be...But It's Not Gonna Matter. Plus: Eusebio Pedroza, Myung Woo Yuh, Willie Meehan, Hearns-Hill preview, computer junior welterweight tournament, Gomez-Fenech, controversial heavyweight finishes (color).

Aug. 1991: Foreman Gives Holyfield A Fight ... And The World A Thrill (color). Plus: Making weight, Harry Greb, Kevin Kelley, Louis-Conn I, Simon Brown-Blocker, Chavez-Duplessis, Sugar Ray Robinson.

Oct. 1991: A Hit Again-How Far Can Thomas Hearns Go? Plus: Battling Levinsky, Oba Carr, Dave McAuley, Muhammad Ali, Lou Ambers, Luther McCarty, ethnic matchups, computer light heavy tournament, Cerdan-Hagler, Rocky Marciano (color).

Nov. 1991: Mike Tyson's Fight For Greatness—Will November 8 Be His Moment? Plus: Edwin Rosario, Jeff Fenech, overrated/underrated, Gardello-Graham, Lennox Lewis, Marcel Cerdan, Leonard-Hearns I, heavyweight computer tournament, Ali portrait (color).

Dec. 1991: Evander Holyfield vs. Mike Tyson: Who Will Win And Why. Plus: Eddie Aliano, Jack Britton, Muhammad Ali, Pernell Whitaker, rating the 44 world champions, Marcel Cerdan, Henry Cooper, Ezzard Charles-Jersey Joe Walcott (color).

Jan. 1992: Our Exclusive Annual Report: The State Of The Game. Plus: Jerry Quarry, Julio Cesar Chavez, Mysterious Billy Smith, Joey Giambra, moving up in weight, Billy Conn-Michael Spinks, Joe Louis (color).

Feb. 1992: James Toney—Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Myung Woo Yuh, Khaosai Galaxy, Rocky Graziano, Billy Soose, Roy Jones, James Warring, Duran-Chavez, Marvin Hagler (color).

June 1992: What Now? Boxing Without Mike Tyson. Plus: Buck Smith, Liston-Foreman, Billy Graham, Holmes-Mercer, Enrique Pinder, Hilario Zapata, Toney-Tiberi, Benny Lynch, Tony DeMarco, Tyson centerfold (color).

July 1992: Does Larry Holmes Deserve A Title Shot? Plus: Nelson-Fenech II, Tracy Patterson, Ike Ibeabuchi-Dorsey, fat fighters, Buchanan-Camacho, Holmes-Ali (color).

Aug. 1992: Holyfield-Holmes Prefight. Holmes: "You'll See Me Takin' Holyfield Outta There." Plus: Buddy McGirt-Barkley, Herbie Hide, George Foreman, Tex Cobb, Carnival of Champions, Harry Greb, Haugen-Mancini, Oscar De La Hoya, Gene Tunney (color).

Sept. 1992: Chavez: Unbeaten At 80-0, But What If He Had To Face These Guys? Plus: Bobby Czyz, Genaro Hernandez, Norris-Taylor, Tommy Gibbons, Sugar Ray Leonard's career, Sugar Ray Robinson (color).

Oct. 1992: The Supreme Dream: The Heavyweight Hopes Of The Heavyweight Hopefuls. Plus: Kevin Kelley, All-Time Top 10: South Africa, Meldrick Taylor, Sharmba Mitchell, Bob Foster, Eder Jofre, Max Baer (color).

Nov. 1992: Is Riddick Bowe The Next Heavyweight Champion? Plus: Morrison-Hipp, Canizales-Chandler, Chavez-Camacho preview, Australia Best of Nation, Tyson speaks from prison, Corbett-Sullivan (color), Tracy Patterson, Pat Barrett, Knockout Brown.

Feb. 1993: America's Tribute To The Brown Bomber: Joe Louis. Plus: Virgil Hill, Junior Jones, Roger Mayweather, Chicago boxing, Orlando Zulueta, Jose Napoles (color).

March 1993: From Question Man To Answer Man: Riddick Bowe Leaves No Doubts. Plus: Lennox Lewis, Lopez-Gamache, Frank Bruno, Rocky Kansas, Frank Fletcher, Crisanto Espana, Bowe-Lewis (color).

April 1993: Riddick Bowe: Fighter Of The Year. Plus: "Grand Slam" fight card, Toney-Barkley preview, Morris East, Joe Louis-John Henry Lewis, All-Time Top 10: Argentina, Fighters of the Year (color).

Aug. 1993: A Ring Exclusive: Julio Cesar Chavez Speaks Out. Plus: Bobby Czyz, 10 hardest punchers, Rafael Ruelas, Carmen Basilio, closing of the Fifth Street Gym, Sugar Ray Leonard (color).

Oct. 1993: Tommy Morrison: Good Enough To Beat Big George, But Will He Win The Heavyweight Title? Plus: Riddick Bowe, Mike Capriano, Billy Conn-Joe Louis, All-Time Top 10: Puerto Rico, Charles Murray.

March 1994: Evander Holyfield's Formula For Success—Obsession + Guts = Fulfillment. Plus: Oscar De La Hoya, Michael Bentt, Kronk, boxing novels, All-Time Top 10: Wales, fight clubs (part II).

April 1994: Michael Carbajal: Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Brown-Norris, Kevin Kelley, Ceferino Garcia, Oscar De La Hoya, Tunney Hunsaker, Spinks-Foster.

May 1994 (92-Page Special) Division-By-Division: The Greatest Fighters Of All-Time. Plus: Virgil Hill & Orlando Canizales, Kostya Tszyu, James Toney, What If ... Dempsey vs. Wills.

June 1994: Moorer-Holyfield: Slugfest Or Stinker? Plus: Terry Norris, Paul Pender, Randall-Chavez I, Gonzales-Carbajal II, kickboxing.

July 1994: "I Wanna Be Like Sugar Ray": Oscar De La Hoya Becomes A Prime-Time Player. Plus: Nigel Benn, Gianfranco Rosi, Sullivan-McCaffrey, Donald-Williams, 10 likely upsets, All-Time Top 10: England.

Aug. 1994: Bowe's Back! Determined To Do It Again. Plus: Eric Griffin, Pernell Whitaker, Ray Mercer, Roger Donoghue, State of the Game (midterm report), All-Time Top 10: The Philippines.

Oct. 1994: Rating The Champs: Whitaker & Toney Lead The Field ... But Roy Jones Is Closing Fast. Plus: Oscar De La Hoya, Meldrick Taylor, Rafael Ruelas, Curtis Cokes.

Nov. 1994: With Lewis Fighting Bowe ... Is Michael Moorer's Career Off-Target? Plus: Wayne McCullough, Hall of Fame, Alejandro Lavorante, Rocky Marciano, Paz-Duran, Injuries (part I), What If ... Pedroza vs. Sanchez.

Dec. 1994: Fighting-Mad! James Toney Just Wants To Beat People Up. Plus: Duran & Robinson, Don King, Mike McCallum, Injuries (part II), Tom Molineaux.

Jan. 1995: A Puncher's Dream: Oliver McCall Upsets Boxing's Balance Of Power. Plus: Ruelas brothers, Quincy Taylor, "Unfinished Business," Dave Maier, All-Time Top 10: Canada.

Feb. 1995: Return To Greatness? Mike Tyson Doesn't Know His Future ... But *The Ring* Does! Plus: Pernell Whitaker, Lennox Lewis, Mark Johnson, Orlando Canizales, Tom Johnson, Irving Cohen.

March 1995 (92-Page Special): Through The Years: The Incredible Career(s) Of George Foreman. Plus: Jones-Toney, Ali in China, Chiquita-Carbajal III, Hank Kaplan.

May 1995: The State Of The Game. Plus: Olzubek & Arbachakov, Gonzalez-Kelley, Pazienza-Duran II, All-Time Top 10: France.

June 1995: (92-Page Special): Foreman Frowns Upon The Age Gap: "I Don't Think Tyson Should Fight Anyone But Me." Plus: Least deserving heavyweight challengers, Carlos Monzon, Kostya Tszyu.

July 1995: Pernell Whitaker: *The Ring* Makes "Pound-For-Pound" An Official Title. Plus: Riddick Bowe, Ike Quartey, Benn-McClellan, TV prospects, Hector Acero-Sanchez, Harry Matthews, What If ... Robinson-Burley.

Aug. 1995: Can Tyson Go From Great To All-Time Great? Plus: Antonio Barrera, Collins-Eubanks, Johnny Paychek, McCall-Holmes.

Sept. 1995: Bona Fide Superstar: Oscar Is The Boxer For The '90s. Plus: George Foreman, Danny Romero, Vincent Pettway, Lou Ambers, George Latka, What If ... McCallum-Hearns.

Oct. 1995: (92-Page Special): Mismatch? Don't Tell Peter McNeeley! Plus: Fights we'd like to see, Jo-el Scott, Bronco McKart, when stop fights?

Nov. 1995: A 6-1 Favorite vs. Any Champion: Maybe They Should Just Give Tyson The Title. Plus: Roy Jones, Riddick Bowe, Ancee Gedeon, Hall of Fame, LaMar Clark, All-Time Top 10: Italy, What If ... Saad Muhammad-Scott.

Dec. 1995: McNeeley Goes Too Soon—Mike Tyson: The Beast Is Yet To Come. Plus: Tommy Morrison, Naseem Hamed, Chiquita Gonzalez, Gaspar Ortega, best chins.

Winter 1995 (92-Page Special): Buster Mathis Jr.: "Mike Tyson, You Got A Fight Comin' On." Plus: Holyfield-Bowe III preview, Wayne McCullough, Jesse James Hughes, Norris-Vaden preview, *The Ring* Insiders' Poll, What If ... Moore-Ayala Jr.

Jan. 1996: Go East, Young Man: Oscar De La Hoya—Making All The Right Moves Plus: Julio Cesar Chavez, Bruno & Eubank, who's hot & who's not, Eddie Perkins.

Feb. 1996: Bowe's The Man (For Now), But Is He Man Enough For Tyson? Also: Lennox Lewis, Hamed-Barrera, Paul Banke, Vince Phillips, boxing on Madison Ave., What If ... Leonard-Pryor.

April 1996: Oscar De La Hoya—Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Mike Tyson, Gabe Ruelas, 1995 in review, All-Time Top 10: Africa.

May 1996: Exclusive Annual Report: The State Of The Game. Plus: Frankie Randall, Tim Witherspoon, Roy Jones, Bernard Hopkins.

June 1996 (92-Page Special): The Top 50 Fighters Of The Last 50 Years. Plus: Barrera-McKinney, Oscar De La Hoya, internet, Decade To Remember (1940s): Jimmy Bivins.

July 1996: Tyson! The Baddest ... But Is He The Best? Plus: De La Hoya-Chavez preview, Fabrice Tiozzo, Tommy Morrison & HIV, Malinga-Benn, closed-circuit, Chacon-Gomez.

Aug. 1996: A Closer Look At Tyson. Where He's At ... And Where He's Going. Plus: Joe Frazier, Roberto Duran, Buster Douglas, Arturo Gatti, women's boxing.

Sept. 1996: Lennox Lewis: Tough Enough For Tyson? Plus: Lewis-Mercer, Olympic team, Pernell Whitaker, Mark Johnson, Rocky, Scrapiron Johnson, heavyweight hopefuls.

Oct. 1996 (92-Page Special): A Lift For Boxing: Oscar's Timing Is Perfect! Plus: What's good and bad about boxing, Azumah Nelson, De La Hoya-Chavez, Charlie Powell.

Nov. 1996: Pole-Axed! Low Blows, Sinking Bowe, Ugly Show. Plus: Bowe-Golota I, Blinky Palermo, exciting fighters, Winky Wright, Joe Brown.

Dec. 1996: Our Spin On Roy Jones. Plus: heavyweight division, Olympic recap, Luis Rodriguez, Puerto Rican fighters, Danny Hodge, Saad Muhammad.

Holiday 1996 (92-Page Special): Tyson-Holyfield. Finally! Plus: Ali, Paz-Rosenblatt, 100 greatest title fights of all-time, Stillman's gym.

Jan. 1997: Riddick Bowe's Promise. "This Time I'm Whipping Golota's Ass!" Plus: David Reid, Whitaker-Rivera II, meaningless records, Dick Tiger, Jess Willard.

Feb. 1997: Holyfield Of Dreams ... And Grim Reality For Iron Mike. Plus: Roy Jones, Ike Quartey, 10 fighters to watch, Joey Giambra, Washington-May, Fred Apostoli.

March 1997 (92-Page Special): Mike Tyson. Can He Reclaim His Greatness? Plus: 10 greatest controversies, Teddy Atlas & Michael Moorer, Kostya Tszyu, George Chuvalo.

April 1997: Evander Holyfield—Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Bowe-Golota II, Nigel Benn, David Reid, 1996 recap, Ray Actis, Joe Bugner.

May 1997: De La Hoya-Whitaker. Can "Sweet Pea" Stop Oscar's March To Greatness? Plus: Fitzsimmons-Corbett, Junior Jones, Phillip Holiday, Don King, Zaragoza-McCullough.

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NEW FACES

DANIEL SANTOS

Welterweight

By Roberto Santiago

Olympic medalist and unbeaten welterweight prospect Daniel Santos has been knocking out his opponents so fast, he can't remember if any of them have tested him.

Well, there was one, sort of.

"Reynaldo Ramirez is the only fighter who has given me any trouble, because my corner wanted me to use my right hand instead of my left," said the southpaw Santos, who had hurt his left in training. "It took me up until the third round to knock him out." He shrugged. "I'm still learning."

Santos is a lanky 5'11", 147-pounder with deadly speed and two-fisted power. Top Rank promoter Bob Arum compares the Puerto Rican to a young Thomas Hearns. Arum signed Santos after seeing him fight at the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta, where he won a bronze medal.

"When I saw Daniel fight, it was like watching a professional knockout artist trying to adapt himself to amateur rules," recalled Arum. "He had everything that Olympic judges don't score: ring dominance, vicious bodyshots, and body-head combinations from different angles. As a result, he earned the bronze medal when he should have won the gold. But that's Olympic scoring for you."

Bring up the Olympics and Santos grimaces in dismay; he is his own harshest critic. He speaks at length of how much trouble he had adjusting his style to Olympic rules, where jabs and straight punches to the face generally count more than Santos' beloved left hooks, uppercuts, and bodyblows.

"My original trainer was my father, Francisco Santos, who honed my style and brought me to an amateur record of 117-3. Santos said. "When it came time for the Olympics, we knew the scoring would be different, so we enlisted the help of Cuban trainer Alejandro De La Torre. [De La Torre had trained, among others, Cuban heavyweight champion Felix Savon.]

"I have been boxing the same way since I've been 11, so it was hard adapting to a new set of rules. The Olympic semifinals are a horrible memory. Everyone said I beat my opponent—except the Olympic judges. It's hard going home with the bronze when you know, under a different set of rules, you would have won the gold."

While Santos' style may not have been ideal for the Olympics, it has been more than good enough for the public, especially in Puerto Rico, where he edged out American League MVP Juan Gonzalez as the island's 1996 Athlete of the Year.

(Continued on page 57)

PRO RECORD

1996		
Sept. 28	Andre Hawthorne, Ft. Worth, TX	KO 1
Oct. 12	Ramon Acosta, Anaheim, CA	KO 1
Nov. 16	Frank Houghtaling, Atlantic City	KO 2
Dec. 10	Juan Herrera, Corpus Christi, TX	KO 1
1997		
Jan. 18	Reynaldo Ramirez, Las Vegas	KO 3
Feb. 12	Mario Nazareno, New York City	KO 2

FIGHTS	WON	LOST	DREW	KOs
6	6	0	0	6

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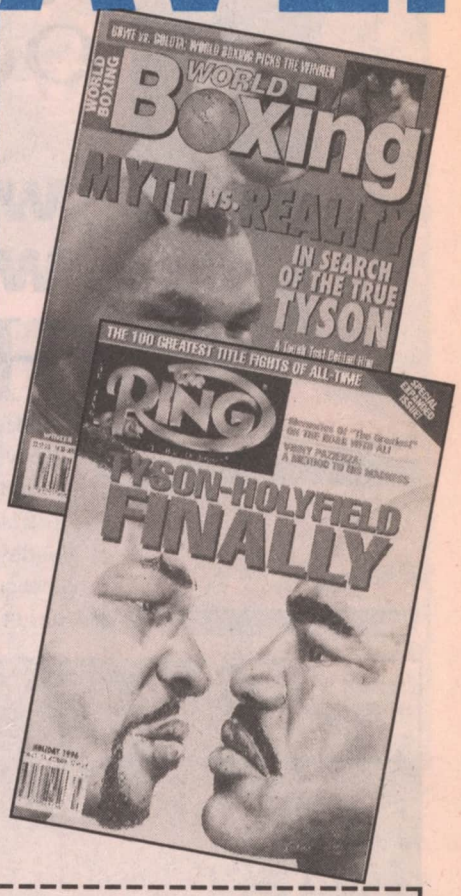

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RYAN OUT LOUD

By Jeff Ryan

WASTED DAYS AND WASTED NIGHTS?

Has everyone stopped to consider the possible ramifications of Mike Tyson losing his rematch with Evander Holyfield? Picture how far the mighty will have fallen. Imagine the shame. The disgrace. The unbearable humiliation. The attempt to slink out of Las Vegas in the dead of night, head bowed, eyes averting everyone's stare, and one of those Floyd Patterson phony beards glued beneath a quivering lip.

But enough about what the media would be going through. Think of poor Tyson.

This is where it's all on the line, fellas. This is where Tyson either proves himself to have been worthy of the incalculable amount of copy, broadcast air time, and editorial conference room discussion of the past decade, or those of us who cover boxing start to feel like Karen Valentine did in one of those bad TV movies of the week. The one in which she learned that the love of her life wasn't the man she thought he was. (He happened to be a spy who was using their relationship as a cover.) Everything she had invested in the relationship, it turned out, had been for naught.

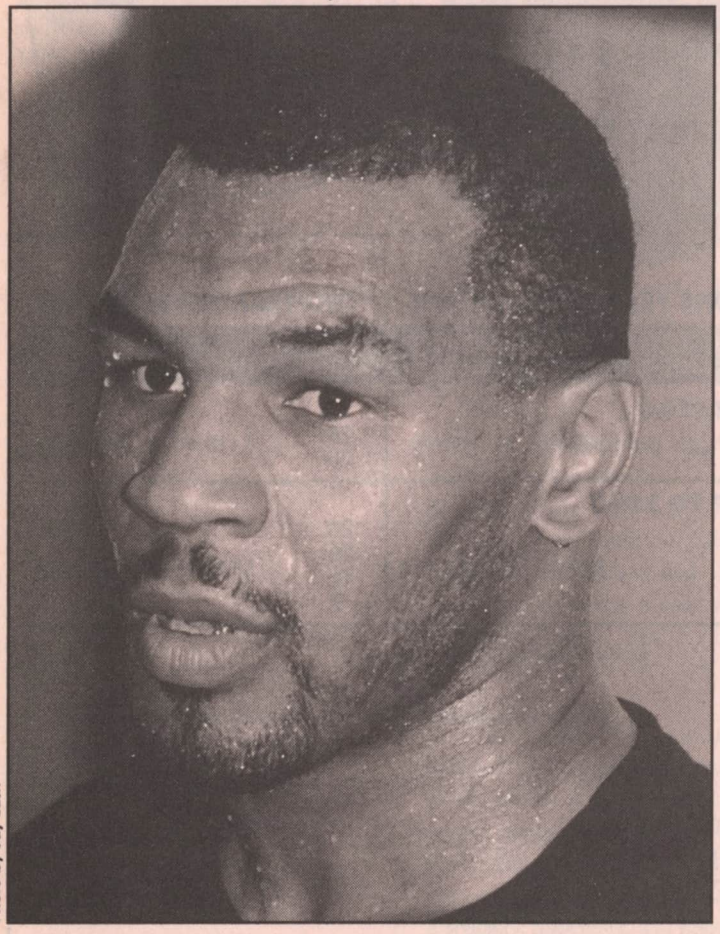


Photo by Jay Lash

Could it be that the media has been wrong about Mike Tyson for all these turbulent years? If "Iron Mike" loses his rematch with Evander Holyfield on May 3, most writers will be an embarrassing 0-for-2 in fight predictions.

The media's marriage with Tyson, though often turbulent, has endured because it has rarely provided a dull moment. When the heavyweight division was a flop-house in the mid-'80s, the title was being passed around like a drunken teenager in a concert mosh pit, and there was nobody on the scene to assume the designation of "The Man." Tyson suddenly descended from the Catskill Mountains one day and we thought we'd found The Man of our dreams. Short, dark, and awesome.

It was love at first sight.

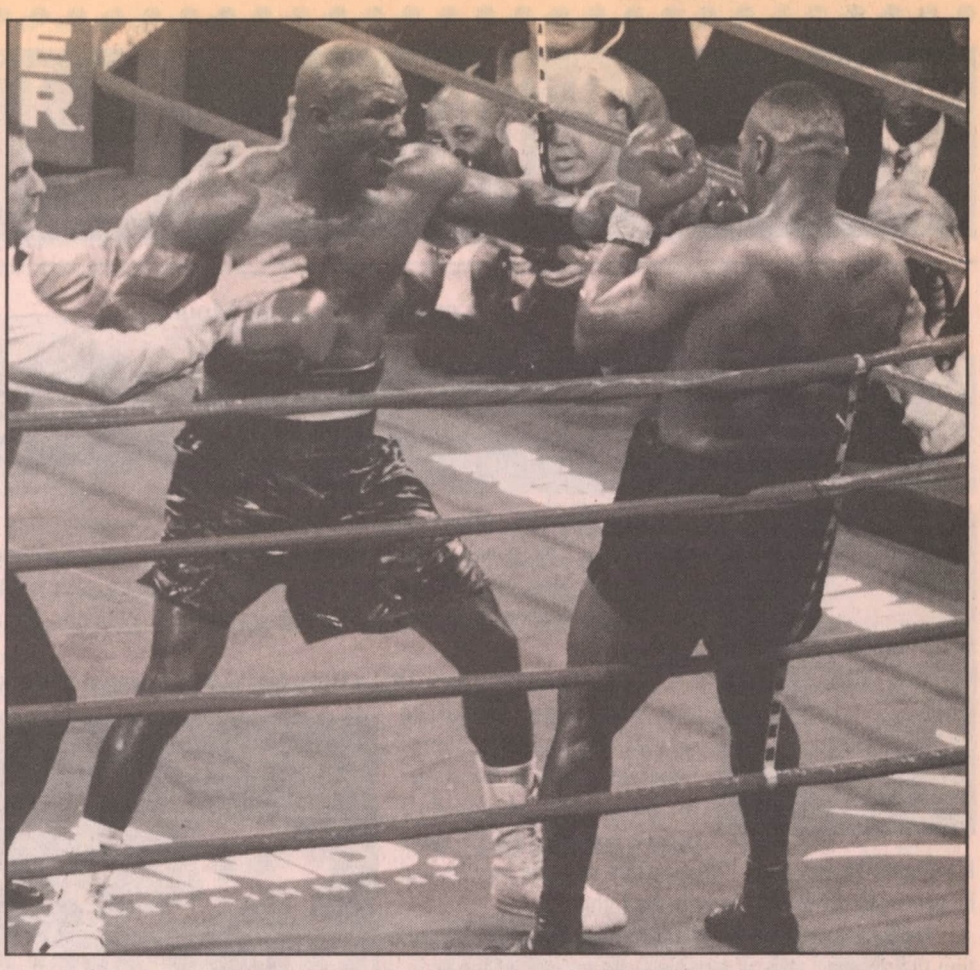
Devastating pop in his mitts. No fat on his frame. Dressed like a throwback. Talking like a historian. Cutting through the division's dead wood like a chainsaw. Tyson's one-two was quickly followed by the ref's "9, 10!" No sooner was Michael Buffer telling us to get ready to rumble than he was telling us to please drive home safely. But nobody felt cheated.

We were all smitten to one degree or another. By the time Tyson took apart Michael Spinks in an eyeblink in 1988, some pundits were convinced that "Kid Dynamite," because of his physical strength and remarkable hand speed, would have knocked the jock off "The Rock" and defused "The Brown Bomber." Dempsey? Liston? Frazier? Easy tuneups en route to the only tough fight on Tyson's dreamfight schedule: a showdown with the prime Cassius Clay/Muhammad Ali.

I'm pleased to say that the aforementioned wave of hysteria never swept me away in its undertow. But at one point, my

all-time heavyweight rankings did have Tyson in the top 10. And I did my share of praise-heaping. That was a time when those of us with a byline seemed to be writing a Tyson story every other day, and we did everything but hang posters on utility poles and offer cash rewards to anyone whose frantic search turned up something resembling a new angle. For a five-year period ('87 to '91), Tyson covers were as much a staple of newsstands as Chicklets and instant lottery tickets.

So many magazine pages. So many columns of newsprint. So many miles of videotape. So many hours of talk radio. And much of it—even after his loss to Buster Douglas and three years in prison—declaring that Cus D'Amato's wild child from the graffiti-splashed alleys of Brooklyn was one of the true greats. That's why the cynic in me can't help but wonder if so many pundits are picking Tyson in the return bout, even pulling for him, because they don't want to see him exposed yet again.



What evidence is there, columnist Ryan wants to know, to suggest that Holyfield-Tyson II will be any different than the original? If Ryan is right, the impact of those jumping off the Tyson bandwagon may register on the Richter scale.

If he appears as befuddled and technically flawed in the sequel as he did on November 9, Tyson will make so many "experts" look bad. In varying degrees, we'll all feel stupid for those laudatory things we wrote and said, and for the disrespect we heaped on the *real* immortals by giving Tyson a seat at their dais. And if we misread a guy who was overwhelming his competition literally without breaking a sweat, unifying a title that hadn't been in one piece for nine years, and winning his biggest fight in 91 seconds, how can we possibly trust our own judgment when it comes to anointing greats in the future?

Though a Tyson victory would validate much of what I've written through the years, including my prediction that he would clearly establish himself as the world's best big man in this second act of his career, my money is on Holyfield. It's almost impossible for me to pick Tyson in light of his never having shown an ability to suck it up in times of crisis. On the two nights in his career that Tyson has been unable to solve a troublesome counterattack or rescue himself with a bomb, he has completely unraveled.

Having Rich Giachetti in the corner is a step up from Jay Bright, but Giachetti is no Eddie Futch or George Benton. And I believe the extra focus, determination, and quest for vengeance Tyson brings into the rematch will be offset by self-doubt. In his quiet moments of introspection, he can't help but realize that he'll be facing an opponent who, just six months earlier, a) absorbed his best shots and fired right back, b) outmuscled him in every test of strength, and c) eventually rendered him helpless.

Remember the adage, "If you knock a guy out, you'll knock him out even quicker in the rematch." So often in boxing, upsets or near-upsets are labeled "off-nights" for the favorite. Then, when the rematch unfolds, and the supposedly better fighter loses or struggles again, it becomes apparent that the first encounter wasn't an off-night at all. It was merely a case of the favorite running into a style or mindset that was all wrong for him. (See Ken Norton-Muhammad Ali, Andrew Golota-Riddick Bowe, Pernell Whitaker-Wilfredo Rivera, etc.)

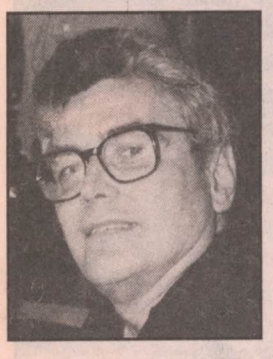
Because Holyfield-Tyson I was a case of the fighter with the better chin and bigger wallop losing not on a fluke or close decision, but in such one-sided fashion, my conclusion is that there was more going on in the ring than just Holyfield being in a zone for one night and Tyson entering the battle overconfident. There were subtle and not-so-subtle technical differences affecting the outcome, factors none of us envisioned, and ones that will prove to be Tyson's undoing again in May.

It appears another silent night is looming for the bigmouths on the Team Tyson roster. Not to mention a night when a thousand of us wearing press credentials may be slapped between the eyes with this realization: While we indeed had one of history's all-time best toiling in front of us for the past decade, we never knew it was the guy who was driving the critics' doubts and the odds-makers' numbers from his mind, not the guy who was driving nose bones into brains. ■

THE RING'S QUESTIONS OF THE MONTH

Compiled by Thad Moore

Q: WHO IS BOXING'S BEST ONE-PUNCH KNOCKOUT ARTIST?



Eddie Schuyler, Associated Press boxing writer: "Pro boxing rewards power. Power wins fights and attracts fans. One punch can win a round for you. If you have skill and power, it makes for an attractive ticket-seller. Most great fighters are bangers. There are more great fighters who can punch than those who can't. Ray Robinson could bang. So could Duran and Ike Williams. Earnie Shavers was the hardest puncher I ever saw.

"Pound-for-pound, Oscar De La Hoya hits as hard as anybody. He's a real heavy-handed kid. He hurts you with every punch he throws. When Jesse James Leija went back to his corner in their fight, he couldn't believe how hard De La Hoya hit. I know he hits hard. I've seen him since he was 16, and he gets fighters' respect early in the fight.

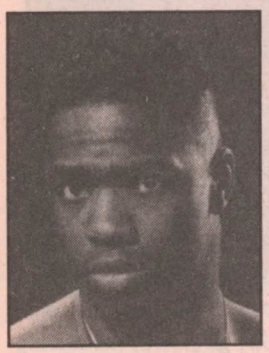
"De La Hoya changes the other fighters' styles by getting their respect. His power dictates the pace of the fight. His one-punch knockdown of Marco Rudolph may have won him the gold medal in the Olympics. If you catch a guy properly, he'll go down. I like Oscar's power as much as anybody's.

"Lennox Lewis is the hardest puncher in the heavyweight division. He won the Frank Bruno fight with one punch. What he did with Razor Ruddock was land one tremendous punch. His right hand is the best punch that he has, but he got Bruno out with a hook. Lewis is able to hit hard with both hands."

Photo by Chris Farina

Is Oscar De La Hoya the hardest one-punch hitter in the game? "The Golden Boy," pictured against Miguel Angel Gonzalez, is particularly devastating with his left hook.

Q: AT THIS POINT IN HIS CAREER, IS AN ACTIVE GEORGE FOREMAN GOOD OR BAD FOR BOXING?



Chris Byrd, undefeated heavyweight: "If he gives young heavyweights a chance to box him, he's good for boxing. If he keeps fighting, instead of talking about fighting, he's good for boxing. Young heavyweights like myself would get a lot of exposure by fighting him.

"Everybody knew Crawford Grimsley after the Foreman fight. He made himself a name. I would like to do the same. I would definitely like to fight Foreman. I would fight anybody with a big name.

"If I fought Foreman, I wouldn't throw many punches in the first three or four rounds. He's real slow. I would use movement and frustrate him. Then I would outbox him over 12 rounds. I'd stay busy and outwork him. He wouldn't know what to do.

"Everybody in the heavyweight division can punch. Foreman's still a legitimate fighter because of his power. If you have power, you always have a shot to win. At 47, he can hold his own. He is always going to be slow, but he has great power no matter what."

What do boxing's insiders think of the hot issues? Each month, we'll come up with four or five questions, then grill the experts. If there's a topic you'd like examined, send your question to The Ring, Questions Of The Month, P.O. Box 1148, Fort Washington, PA 19034

Q: HOW SUCCESSFUL WILL OSCAR DE LA HOYA BE AS HE RISES IN WEIGHT?

Bruce Trampler, matchmaker for Top Rank Boxing: "It depends on how quickly he moves up. Oscar will eventually peak at 160 pounds. If it turns out to be a natural process, it will depend on how active he is. He has a physical therapist. His weight is monitored properly.

"Oscar's a great athlete who's blessed with great coordination. He has tremendous boxing skills. He hasn't reached his peak yet. He may be three years away from that. There is no sense of urgency for him to move up.

"Nature will take care of the process. Whenever it happens, it happens. Only time will tell if he'll be successful. He has quickness, great hand speed, and improved defense. If he keeps improving, there's no telling how successful he'll be. He gets better all the time. This is a guy who in a couple of years who could be considered an all-time great fighter.

"In terms of ability, he'll keep getting better. As he goes up in weight, he'll be the same fighter we see now. There's no reason for him to change. He doesn't think about what weight he'll wind up fighting at. Right now, he is a kid who is just enjoying what he is doing and having a lot of fun."

Q: CAN MIKE TYSON MAKE THE CHANGES NECESSARY TO BEAT EVANDER HOLYFIELD?

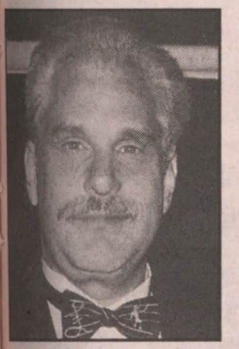


Photo by Chris Farina

Al Bernstein, ESPN boxing analyst: "I don't think it's a mystery what Tyson needs to do. He needs to get back to basics. He's a heavyweight who punches very well, but doesn't knock guys out with one punch. He used to have head movement and work the jab effectively, and he didn't stand straight up. Now he throws leaping punches and his defense is not as good.

"What he needs is a trainer who can prepare him. He needs to be physically and mentally prepared to get it down. Kevin Rooney trained the style that Tyson fought. I don't know if Rich Giachetti is the guy. He's a curious choice.

"More depends on Holyfield than Tyson. Tyson will employ some of the tactics I talked about. If Holyfield can focus, I think he can knock him out sooner. One of the things Holyfield has going for him is that there is now some doubt in Tyson's mind. If Holyfield uses his jab more, he can win easier. The Tyson that we see in the rematch will be somewhere in between the first fight and the early Tyson.

"Tyson's skills have eroded consistently. If he doesn't knock you out early, he's in trouble. A better Tyson beats most heavyweights out there. I don't think he'll be able to be as good as he was before prison. He's young enough to do it. But Holyfield is one of the 10 best heavyweights of all-time. I think Tyson will only improve a notch or two, and that won't be enough."

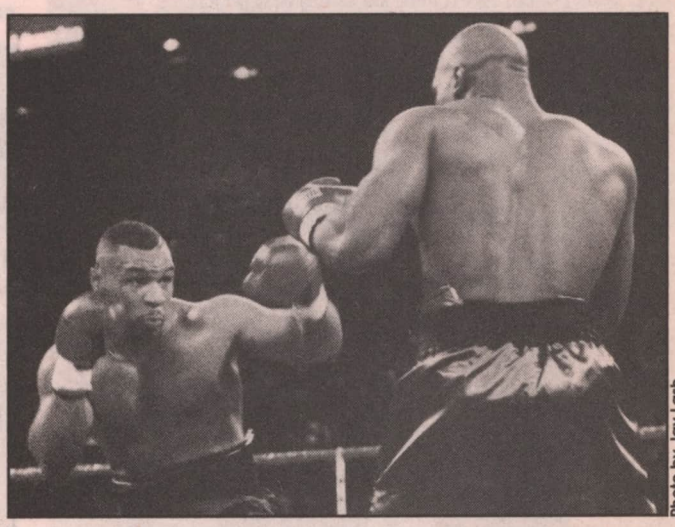
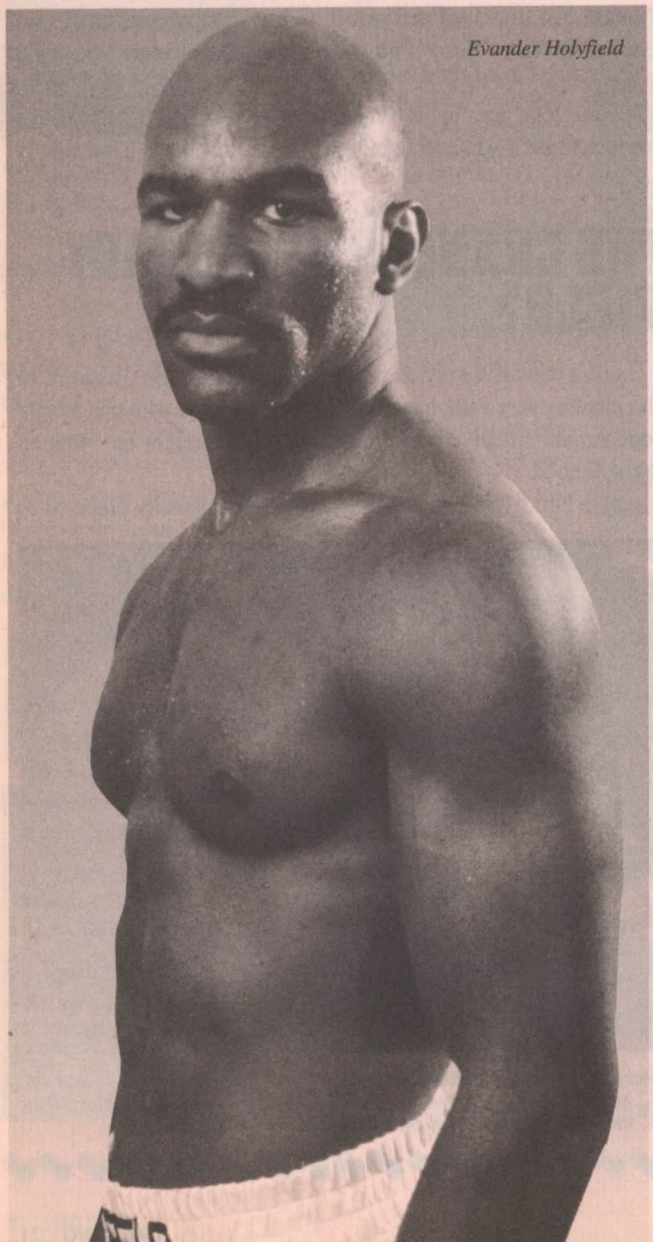


Photo by Jay Lash

In his fight vs. Evander Holyfield, Mike Tyson was predictable; "The Real Deal" seemed to know Tyson was going to lead with a hook before "Iron Mike" did. Is Tyson capable of changing his game for the rematch?

Our Exclusive Annual Report

THE STATE OF THE GAME



Evander Holyfield

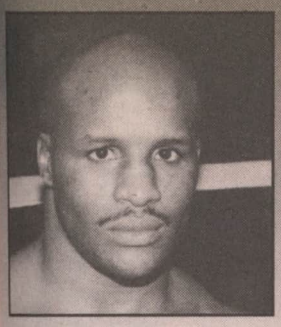
By Steve Farhood

The story of 1996 was Evander Holyfield-Mike Tyson. The story of '97 will be Holyfield-Tyson II, but also De La Hoya-Whitaker, Norris-Trinidad, Romero-Tapia, and maybe one or two other dream fights. The state of the game ain't great, but it's certainly better than it was.

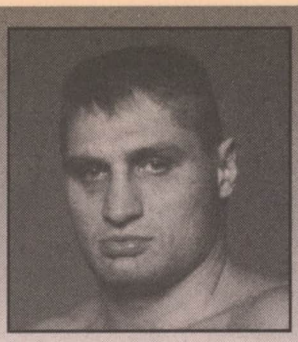
HEAVYWEIGHTS

If you know what's going on in this division, maybe you can tell us. Mike Tyson didn't have a clue against Evander Holyfield and got stopped in the 11th round. So, of course, he's a 2-1 favorite in the rematch. Holyfield was supposed to be used up. In fact, some insiders suggested he'd leave the Tyson fight in an ambulance. So, of course, he fought the fight of his life. Riddick Bowe was the media's pick as the best fighter in the division. So, of course, he looked shot in two bizarre bouts vs. Andrew Golota and joined the Marines. As for Golota, he seems destined to

Ray Mercer punishes Tim Witherspoon



Michael Moorer



Andrew Golota

spend more time on the psychiatrist's couch than in the ring. Lennox Lewis, again the WBC champion, may emerge as number one by default.

As for the others, IBF champion Michael Moorer still needs a win over a big name. (Sorry, but Vaughn Bean ain't gonna do it.) Maybe Moorer will get Holyfield again. Don't dismiss Henry Akinwande, who's awkward and continues to improve. At the opposite end of the entertainment scale from the 6'7" Akinwande is the 5'10" David Tua, a legitimate puncher who's a year away from stardom.

Think About It: It's easy to lump together Ray Mercer, 36, and Tim Witherspoon, 39, both of whom reemerged in 1996. But there's a clear difference between them, as was evidenced by the second half of their showdown in December. Where the increasingly mature and versatile Mercer is fighting better than ever, Spoon will never be as effective as he was in the mid-'80s. Both, however, will secure big fights this year. If you're a heavyweight, youth is nothing but a waste of time.

HEAVYWEIGHT

Best Puncher
Mike Tyson

Best Boxer
Evander Holyfield

Most Protected
Corrie Sanders

Is He *Still* Around?
Michael Dokes

Matchmaker's Dream
Mike Tyson-Andrew Golota

Best-Kept Secret
Zeljko Mavrovic

Deserves A Title Shot
Tim Witherspoon

Most Fun To Watch
David Tua

On The Way Down
Oliver McCall

Underrated
Henry Akinwande

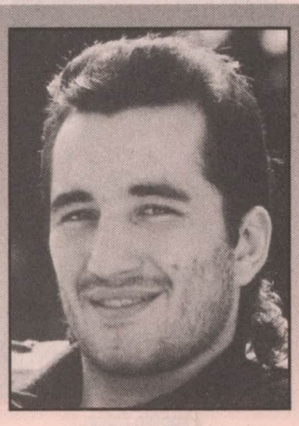
Best Fight In 1996
Evander Holyfield KO 11
Mike Tyson

CRUISERWEIGHTS

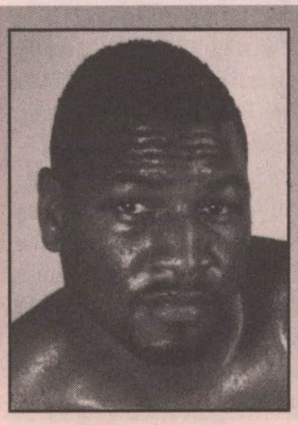
Here's the problem in the Siberia of weight classes: Adolpho Washington won the IBF title in his fourth shot at world honors, and Nate Miller captured the WBA crown in his second try. If the division had retained its top talent, would either fighter have reached his current status, or even secured more than one title fight? In the cruisers' remarkably uneventful 17-year history, the best fighters (Evander Holyfield and Dwight Qawi, and more recently Orlin Norris and Al Cole) have jumped to heavyweight. That ain't gonna change. As a result, we're left with Washington, Miller, WBC champion Marcelo Dominguez, and a handful of contenders who are nameless, faceless, and talentless, and destined to remain as such.

There is, however, a glimmer of hope. Toward the end of 1996, there were preliminary negotiations for a title fight matching Washington and Roy Jones. Should boxing's pound-for-pound king take such a bout, the cruisers will draw the spotlight for the first time since Holyfield challenged Qawi more than 10 years ago.

Think About It: Last year in this space, we talked about the odds against blown-up cruisers Al Cole, Bobby Czyz, and Orlin Norris making it big as heavyweights. Well, in '96, Cole lost in a crossroads fight to Tim Witherspoon, then scored two quickie wins against softies. Czyz tried his best against Evander Holyfield in May, but suffered a fifth-round TKO defeat. And Norris finished a throw-away year by posting a 10-round *split* decision win over the sub-.500 Marion Wilson. A suggestion for today's cruiser champs: Stay put.



Fabrice Tiozzo



Adolpho Washington

CRUISERWEIGHT

Best Puncher
Nate Miller

Best Boxer
Fabrice Tiozzo

Most Protected
Jose Gomes

Is He *Still* Around?
Uriah Grant

Matchmaker's Dream
Nate Miller-Adolpho Washington

Best-Kept Secret
Don Diego Poeder

Deserves A Title Shot
Robert Daniels

Most Fun To Watch
Kenny Keene

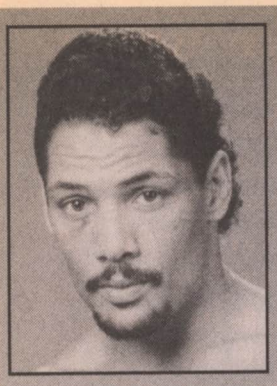
On The Way Down
Brian LaSpada

Underrated
Marcelo Dominguez

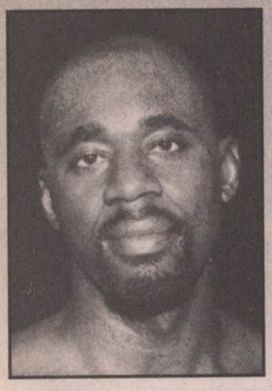
Best Fight In 1996
Adolpho Washington W 12
Torsten May

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS

A year ago, this division deserved to be nuked out of its misery. Things have improved. WBC champion Roy Jones is an inspired addition. As we went to press, he was scheduled to face Montell Griffin. Pound-for-pound leader Jones might win easily, but how can anyone complain about a match between fighters with a combined record of 60-0? WBA-IBF titlist Virgil Hill finished '96 by partly unifying with a road victory over the previously unbeaten (and now retired) Henry Maske. We don't often compliment Hill, but the longtime champ de-



Virgil Hill



William Guthrie

serves lots of credit for taking that step. And at least James Toney fights often.

Dariusz Michalczewski is hidden in Germany, but there are two other contenders who are worth watching. Difficult southpaw (is that redundant?) Lou Del Valle emerged by almost dethroning Hill, and one-time drug dealer William Guthrie, sure to secure his first title shot before the year is out, is not only street-smart, but ring-smart, too.

Don't let it get you down that Michael Nunn, Frank Tate, and Chris Eubank remain in the ratings. There's always the Dominick Carter-Rocky Gannon rematch to look forward to.

Think About It: Heavyweights George Foreman and Larry Holmes are leading the Seniors Tour, but historically, it's light heavyweights who excel at advanced ages. Bob Fitzsimmons won the world title at 40, Archie Moore at 39, Dick Tiger at 37, Dennis Andries for the third time at 36, and Harold Johnson at 33. That means there's still hope for Mike McCallum, who is trying to regain the title at age 40.

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT

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Roy Jones

Best Boxer
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Most Protected
Darrin Allen

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Matchmaker's Dream
Roy Jones-Virgil Hill

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William Guthrie

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Rocky Gannon

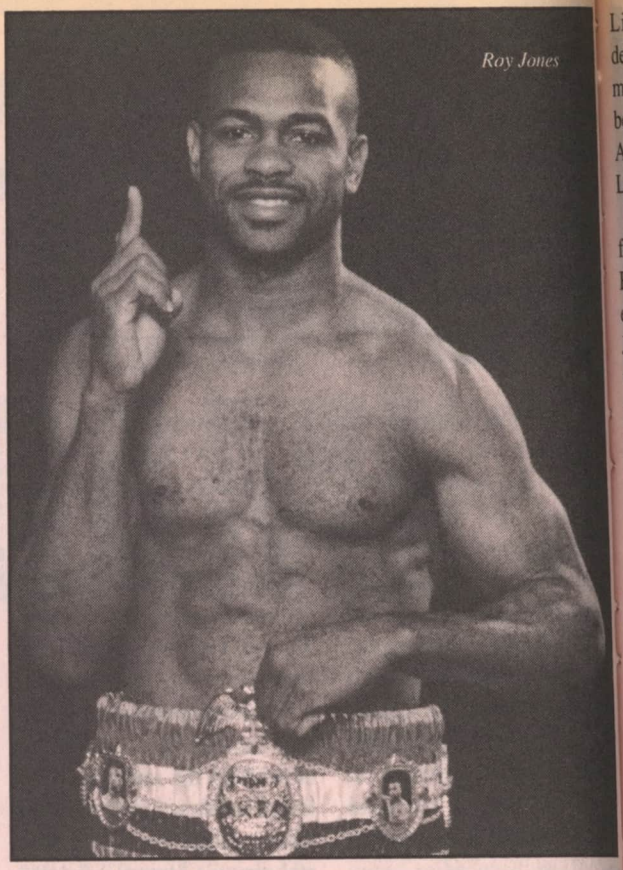
On The Way Down
Mike McCallum

Underrated
Dariusz Michalczewski

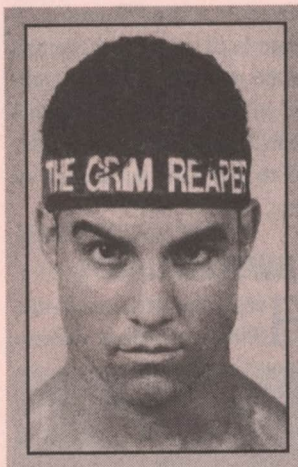
Best Fight In 1996
Dominick Carter KO 1 Rocky Gannon

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS

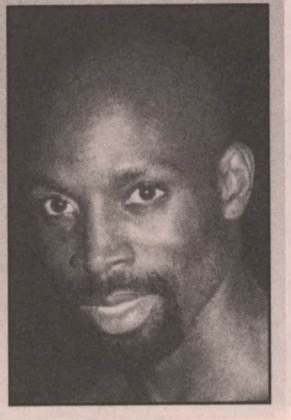
Roy Jones doesn't want to fight anybody? Nobody wants to fight Jones? You know what? It doesn't really matter, because ever since Nigel Benn-Gerald McClellan, there hasn't been a single 168-pound matchup worth hyperventilating over. IBF champion Jones is two tons better than anyone else, and now he's splitting his time with the light heavyweights. It's never been easy getting excited about workmanlike Steve Collins and stringbean southpaw Frankie



Roy Jones



Robin Reid



Frankie Liles

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHT

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Most Fun To Watch
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Best Fight In 1996
Frankie Liles KO 3 Tim Littles

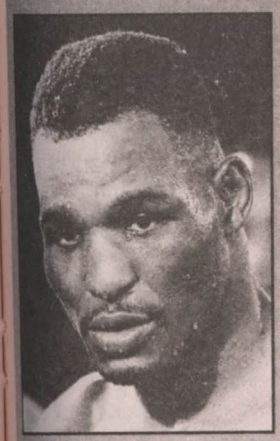
Liles. Vinny Pazienza, the devil with nine lives, is a legitimate headliner, but he wants to be a movie star. ("Makeup!") Anybody for Sugar Ray Leonard-Thomas Hearns III?

There are a couple of fresh faces here. WBC champ Robin Reid is a good-looking puncher, albeit relatively unproven. Joseph Kiwanuka, a warrior with a winning style, broke through with wins over Rodney Toney and Segundo Mercado. One other guy to watch: Zafarou Ballogou, a veteran southpaw who's undefeated in the '90s. He just might be the greatest 168-pounder ever from Togo.

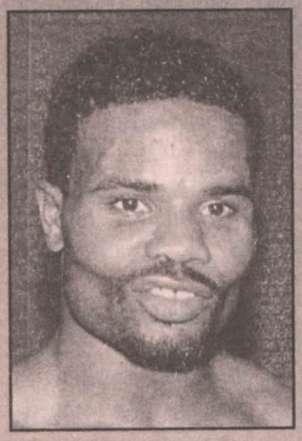
Think About It: Does this division ever need an injection of new talent. Of the 213 televised bouts in 1996 (including cable-network main events and all fights shown on PPV and commercial networks), 11 were super middleweight contests. Only two, Frankie Liles-Tim Littles and Vinny Pazienza-Dana Rosenblatt, turned out to be must-see TV. We knew we were in trouble when the mystery surrounding one of Roy Jones' bouts concerned how many three-pointers he'd make that afternoon.

MIDDLEWEIGHTS

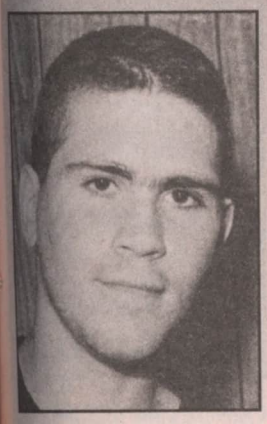
So starved for familiar names is this once-proud division that after John David Jackson lost to someone named Abdul Ramadan, he remained the IBF's highest-rated contender. Jackson is scheduled to tackle IBF champ Bernard Hopkins, who, if not slowed by legal hassles with promoter Butch Lewis, will cement his status as the best of a forgettable lot. Unbeaten Lonnie Bradley has star potential, but he's at war with manager Dave



Bernard Hopkins

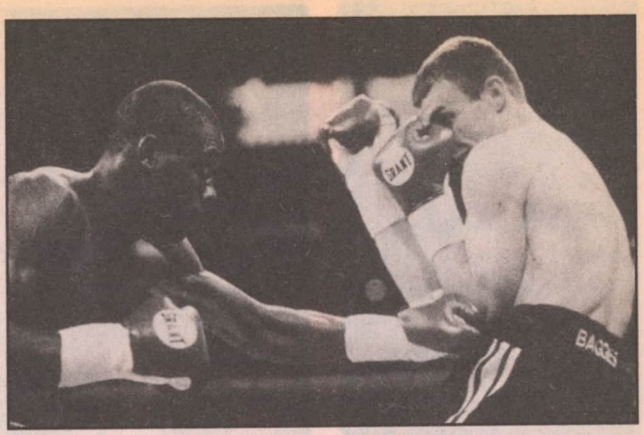


William Joppy



Dana Rosenblatt

Lonnie Bradley

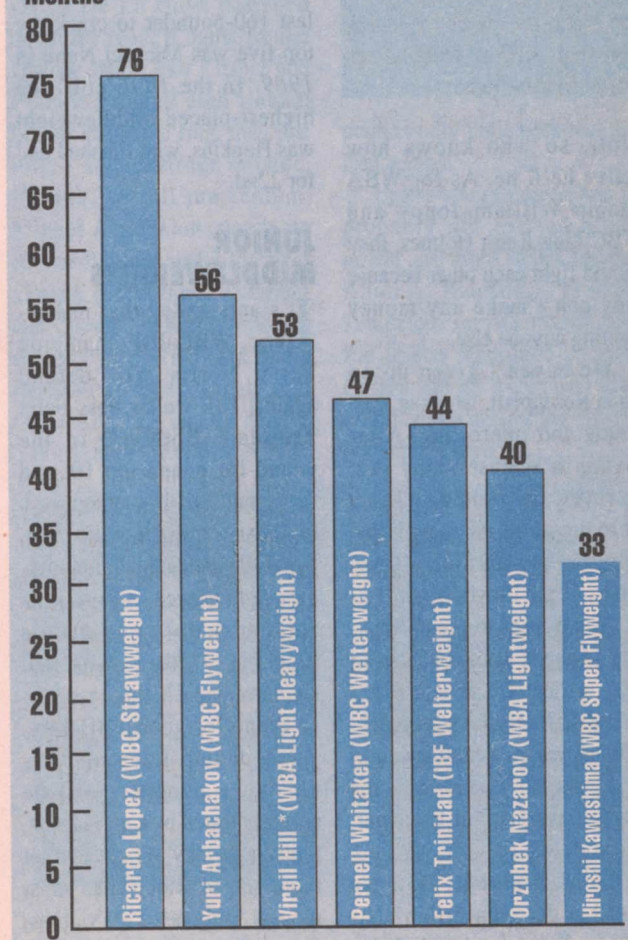


Keith Holmes fires at Richie Woodhall

LONGEST-REIGNING CHAMPIONS

The following shows boxing's most established champions, as well as the number of months of their uninterrupted reigns. This year's additions: Pernell Whitaker, Felix Trinidad, Orzubek Nazarov, and Hiroshi Kawashima. Gone from last year: Anaclet Wamba, Al Cole, and Miguel Angel Gonzalez, all of whom vacated, and Nigel Benn.

**Hill also reigns as IBF light heavyweight champion*



MIDDLEWEIGHT

Best Puncher
Bernard Hopkins

Best Boxer
Bernard Hopkins

Most Protected
Robert McCracken

Is He *Still* Around?
Buddy McGirt

Matchmaker's Dream
Bernard Hopkins-Lonnie Bradley

Best-Kept Secret
Glen Johnson

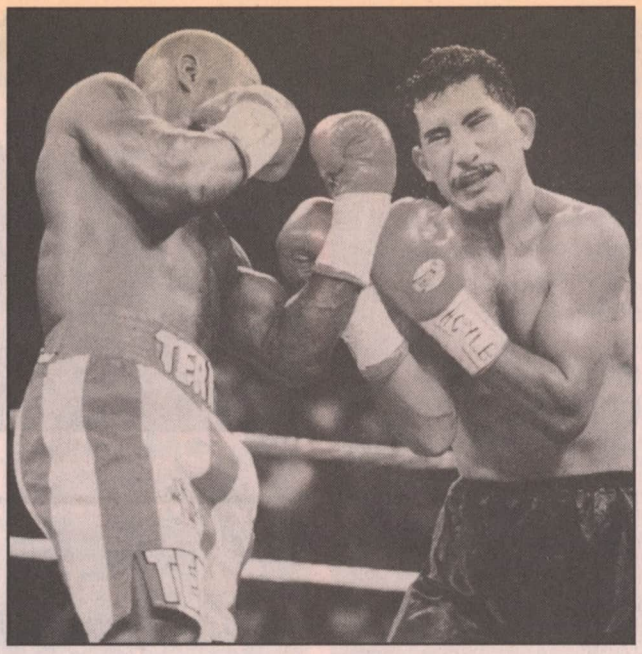
Deserves A Title Shot
Jorge Castro

Most Fun To Watch
Brian Barbosa

On The Way Down
Simon Brown

Underrated
William Joppy

Best Fight In 1996
Lonnie Bradley W 12 Simon Brown



Terry Norris hammers Alex Rios

JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHT

Best Puncher
Laurent Boudouani

Best Boxer
Winky Wright

Most Protected
Raul Marquez

Is He *Still* Around?
Gianfranco Rosi

Matchmaker's Dream
Terry Norris-Felix Trinidad

Best-Kept Secret
Adrian Dodson

Deserves A Title Shot
Bronco McKart

Most Fun To Watch
Troy Waters

On The Way Down
Shibata Flores

Underrated
Rodney Jones

Best Fight In 1996
Winky Wright W 12 Bronco McKart

Wolf, so who knows how active he'll be. As for WBA champ William Joppy and WBC king Keith Holmes, they should fight each other because they can't make any money fighting anyone else.

We haven't given up on Dana Rosenblatt, who's at least young and interesting. After caving in against Vinny Paz, however, the southpaw has a lot to prove. So do rising hopefuls Brian Barbosa, Glen Johnson, and Lloyd Bryan.

As we went to press, Sugar Ray Leonard was scheduled to take on Hector Camacho. That this will likely be the year's most anticipated middleweight bout makes us pine not only for Marvin Hagler, but Caveman Lee, too.

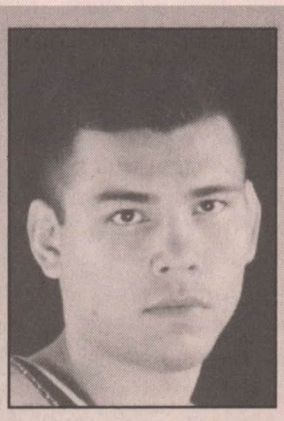
Think About It: How far has this division fallen? No fighter has ever headed the annual *KO* "Best Fighter" poll longer than former middleweight champion Marvin Hagler, who was voted number one from 1983 to 1986. The last 160-pounder to crack the top five was Michael Nunn in *1989*. In the 1996 poll, the highest-placed middleweight was Hopkins, who finished tied for 22nd.

JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS

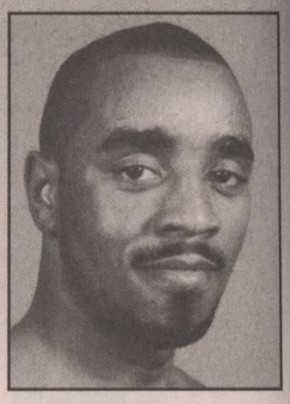
It's anticipated that in late-June, WBC-IBF champion Terry Norris will defend against IBF welter boss Felix Trinidad. Both are in the pound-for-pound top 10, and their styles all but guarantee a candidate for Fight of the Year. Norris-Trinidad is junior middleweight heaven. If there's not another major fight at this weight in '97, the division will still have had a helluva year.

Plenty of good stuff here. WBA champ Laurent Boudouani, a puncher, will be severely tested by Carl Daniels, a boxer. Winky Wright is a lot more fun to watch than most movers, and one of his victims, Bronco McKart, remains solid. If Raul Marquez continues to fight like he did against Rafael Williams, he'll threaten the champions. We've been waiting since the 1992 Olympics for the southpaw to excite us. Maybe he'll finally emerge. Two other fighters to keep an eye on: Guyana-born Englishman Adrian Dodson, a lefthander who's classy inside the ring and refreshingly candid and cocky outside, and U.S. Olympic gold medalist David Reid.

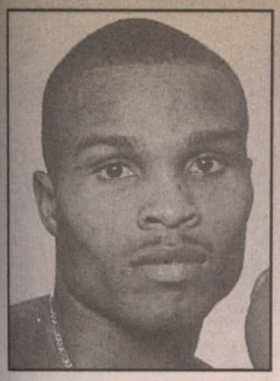
Think About It: Let's hope that when Norris and Trinidad clash, they remember how to perform against top competition. Three of Norris' nine most recent title fights have come against Luis Santana. He's also faced David Gonzales, Jorge Luis Vado, Alex Rios, and Nick Rupa, none of whom were rated by THE RING. In 1994, Trinidad defended against Hector Camacho, Yori Boy Campas, and Oba Carr.



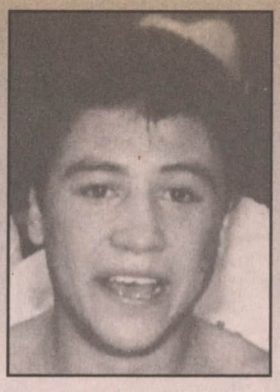
Raul Marquez



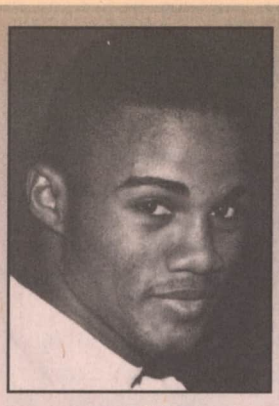
Carl Daniels



Ike Quartey



Jose Luis Lopez



Felix Trinidad

Since then? Six defenses, and not one vs. a fighter ranked at welter by THE RING.

WELTERWEIGHTS

By the time you read this, Oscar De La Hoya, a 3-1 favorite, will have crushed WBC champion Pernell Whitaker, ending "Sweet Pea's" stay at or near the top of the pound-for-pound ratings.

WELTERWEIGHT

Best Puncher
Felix Trinidad

Best Boxer
Pernell Whitaker

Most Protected
Freddy Ladd

Is He *Still* Around?
Meldrick Taylor

Matchmaker's Dream
Felix Trinidad-Oscar De La Hoya

Best-Kept Secret
Shannan Taylor

Deserves A Title Shot
Jose Luis Lopez

Most Fun To Watch
Jose Luis Navarro

On The Way Down
Jake Rodriguez

Underrated
Oba Carr

Best Fight In 1996
Skipper Kelp W 10
Adrian Stone

Or Whitaker will have taught young Oscar a lesson, slowing "The Golden Boy's" rocket run to greatness. Either way, the winner will lead the division, if not all of boxing.

When Felix Trinidad moves up, WBA champ Ike Quartey will be the biggest threat to the De La Hoya-Whitaker winner. No one wants to fight the Ghanaian, and with good reason. Hitting as hard as he does, he's the ultimate high-risk, low-reward opponent. Mexico's Jose Luis Lopez, a boxer-puncher who enjoyed a fantastic 1996, is next-best. And watch for IBF junior welter king Kostya Tszyu, who's being groomed for a superfight with De La Hoya. Whether the Russian is big enough to compete at 147 is problematic.

The division remains strong at the top, but it's no longer deep. Oba Carr falls just short, Derrell Coley is undependable, and how much longer are we supposed to wait for Crisanto Espana to reemerge? The future is represented by Puerto Rican Olympian Daniel Santos, who's being compared to a young Thomas Hearns, and to a lesser extent, Australia's Shannan Taylor.

Think About It: If only every division was as stable as the welters. As we went to press, the reigning champs, Whitaker, Trinidad, and Quartey, combined to average eight defenses. Almost all of the other three-titlist divisions average fewer than three. Then again, maybe such stability isn't so desirable. If any of the members of our terrific trio had tried to unify, that average wouldn't be so high.

JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS

Talk about a division in transition. After a short pit stop, Oscar De La Hoya has sped down the road. If aging former champs Julio Cesar Chavez and Frankie Randall aren't again beaten inside the ring, they just might self-destruct outside. Having lost all momentum, Miguel Angel Gonzalez is no longer thought to be the next Chavez. (Interestingly, Gonzalez and Chavez are ranked first and second by the WBC, and De La Hoya is about to vacate that title.) And IBF champ Kostya Tszyu may remain at 140 pounds only until beckoned by De La Hoya.

Unless you're French, you're probably not excited about newly crowned WBA champ Khalid Rahilou. Freddie Pendleton, Joey Gamache, and Raf Ruelas seem used-up. And Charles Murray's chin isn't likely to hold up against the power-punching Tszyu.

JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHT

Best Puncher
Oscar De La Hoya

Best Boxer
Oscar De La Hoya

Most Protected
Sharmba Mitchell

Is He *Still* Around?
Livingstone Bramble

Matchmaker's Dream
Oscar De La Hoya-Kostya Tszyu

Best-Kept Secret
Mark Lewis

Deserves A Title Shot
Charles Murray

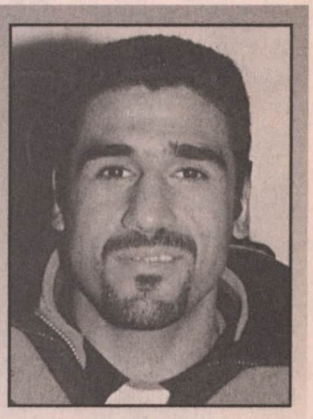
Most Fun To Watch
Bolillo Gonzalez

On The Way Down
Frankie Randall

Underrated
Khalid Rahilou

Best Fight In 1996
Kostya Tszyu KO 6 Jan Bergman

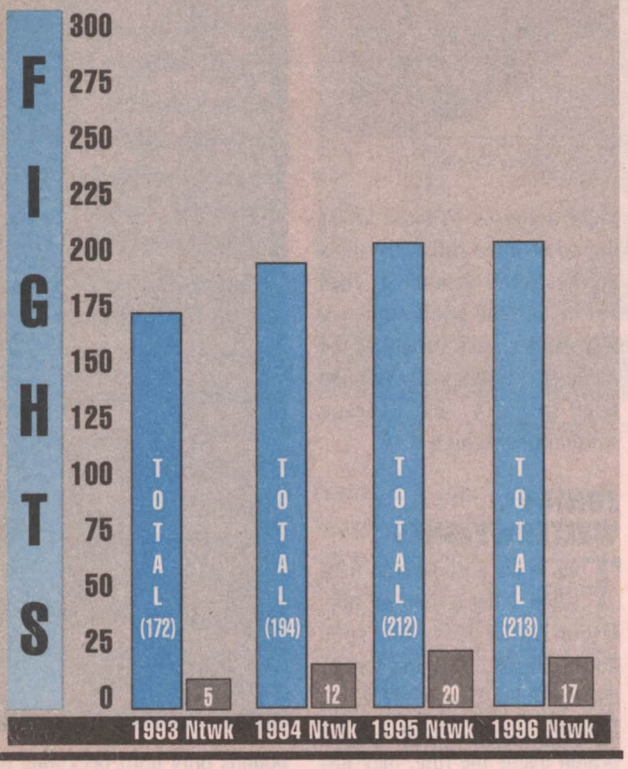
Julio Cesar Chavez



Khalid Rahilou

BOXING ON TV

Just how much boxing is on television? The following graph charts the number of bouts aired over the last four years. Fights include cable-televised main events only, and all commercial, pay-per-view, and pay-TV bouts.



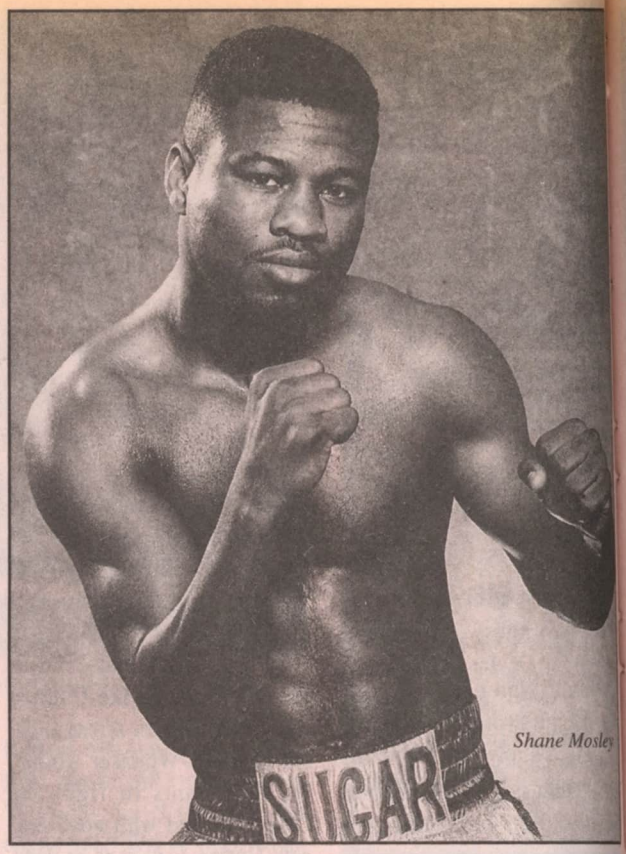
Since the start of the decade, this has been among the strongest weight classes in the game. That run appears to be over.

Think About It: Almost every top 140-pounder of the '90s (Chavez, Randall, De La Hoya, Meldrick Taylor) moved up from lightweight. Take a look at today's lightweight division and try to find the junior welter stars of tomorrow. No, huh? We didn't think so.

LIGHTWEIGHTS

Bad enough we're never sure whether his first name is his last, or his last name is his first, but WBA champ Orzubek Nazarov, who's the division's best, disappeared for most of 1996. No Arguellos, Rosarios, or Whitakers here. Toward the end of the year, a glimmer of hope was provided by IBF titlist Phillip Holiday, who threw a career's worth of punches vs. Ivan Robinson. And unbeaten contender Shane Mosley, previously beset by managerial problems, is ready to accelerate. If "Sugar Shane" and spicy little Steve Johnston, who as we went to press was about to challenge aging WBC champ Jean-Baptiste Mendy, are reigning by the end of the year, everything will be nice.

Many of the other top names at 135 (Philadelphia's Robinson, powerpuncher Leavander Johnson, Canada's Billy Irwin) are entertainers. The gifted Floyd Mayweather Jr. will eventually move up from junior lightweight. The U.S. Olympian might be the division's next great fighter.



Shane Mosley

LIGHTWEIGHT

Best Puncher
Orzubek Nazarov

Best Boxer
Shane Mosley

Most Protected
Cesar Bazan

Is He *Still* Around?
Rudy Zavala

Matchmaker's Dream
Orzubek Nazarov-Phillip Holiday

Best-Kept Secret
Artur Grigorjan

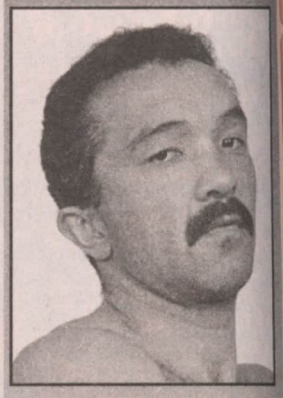
Deserves A Title Shot
John-John Molina

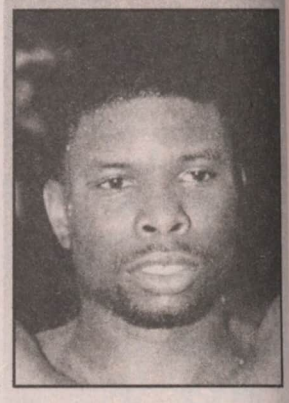
Most Fun To Watch
Billy Irwin

On The Way Down
Victor Hugo Paz

Underrated
Steve Johnston

Best Fight In 1996
Phillip Holiday W 12 Ivan Robinson


Orzubek Nazarov


Ivan Robinson

Think About It: American fighters have a friend in the IBF. Consider that over the last 10 years, only three of the WBA and WBC's 11 different lightweight champs have been from the USA (Pernell Whitaker, Joey Gamache, and Tony Lopez). Then consider that over the same period, all six of the IBF titlists preceding Holiday wore red-white-and-blue. Moreover, as we went to press, six of the IBF's top 10-rated 135-pounders were American, while the WBC ranked only six Americans in its top *30*.

JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS

This division is all about change and chance. At the top, there's lots of opportunity for change. Arturo Gatti just held off the challenge of Tracy Patterson. As we went to press, ageless WBC champ Azumah Nelson was preparing to defend against former titlist Genaro Hernandez. And in February, top-five contender Reggie Tuur unexpectedly announced his retirement. Tuur has committed his time to his line of clothing in Europe. Something tells us he'll be back.

JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHT

Best Puncher
Arturo Gatti

Best Boxer
Azumah Nelson

Most Protected
Djamel Lifa

Is He *Still* Around?
Troy Dorsey

Matchmaker's Dream
Azumah Nelson-Arturo Gatti

Best-Kept Secret
Justin Juuko

Deserves A Title Shot
Julien Lorcy

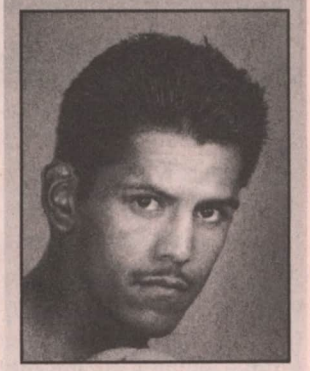
Most Fun To Watch
Orlando Soto

On The Way Down
Jesse James Leija

Underrated
Angel Manfredy

Best Fight In 1996
Arturo Gatti KO 6 Wilson Rodriguez

Yong Soo Choi



Gabe Ruelas

Maybe he'll never be the same, but Gabe Ruelas deserves another chance. Robert "Grandpa" Garcia deserves his *first* chance. And having been given the chance to prove he was deserving of championship status, WBA champ Yong Soo Choi came through against Orlando Soto. Choi will likely remain put in South Korea. Too bad, because he makes for exciting fights.

Cuban refugee and former Olympic gold medalist Joel Casamayor heads the list of up-and-comers. By the end of the year, he should be a 10-round fighter. And keep an eye on England-based Ugandan Justin Juuko and France's Julien Lorcy.

Think About It: Future Hall of Famer Nelson is remarkable in a number of ways. Looking at his fight-by-fight record, you might figure him to be a slow starter. After all, he's 38, and he hasn't fought more than twice in a year since *1988*. Well, consider that in both of Nelson's sole performances in 1995 and '96 (vs. Gabe Ruelas and Jesse James Leija, respectively), the "slow starter" scored first-round knockdowns. When the bell rings, "The Professor" is ready to teach.

FEATHERWEIGHTS

All hail Prince Naseem Hamed, who became legitimate royalty by stopping long-time division leader Tom Johnson in February. As unorthodox and occasionally sloppy as the brash Englishman can be, his power can no longer be questioned. Look for Hamed to dominate at 126 pounds for as long as he likes. As for Johnson, he'll likely campaign at 130.

At age 35, WBA champ Wilfredo Vazquez wants two things: a big payday and a chance to win a world title at a fourth weight. If he gets his druthers, he'll partially unify vs. Hamed, then try for a portion of the 130-pound crown. Don't

FEATHERWEIGHT

Best Puncher
Naseem Hamed

Best Boxer
Kevin Kelley

Most Protected
November Ntshingila

Is He *Still* Around?
Louie Espinoza

Matchmaker's Dream
Naseem Hamed-Junior Jones

Best-Kept Secret
Juan Manuel Marquez

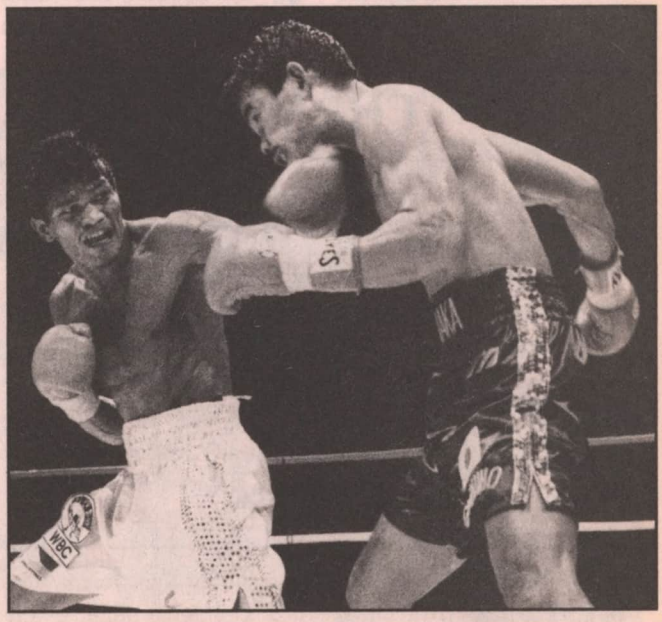
Deserves A Title Shot
Kevin Kelley

Most Fun To Watch
Angel Vasquez

On The Way Down
Miguel Arrozal

Underrated
Luisito Espinosa

Best Fight In 1996
Kevin Kelley KO 8 Derrick Gainer



Luisito Espinosa kayos Nobutoshi Hiranaka

bet on him pulling it off. Similarly, WBC boss Luisito Espinosa, 29, and a pro for 13 years, is at an advanced stage of his career. But unlike Vazquez, the lanky left-hooker seems to be getting better.

If anyone has earned a title shot, it's Kevin Kelley, who has given this division his blood and guts. The best bet for future success is Mexico's Juan Manuel Marquez, but he may move up. Lots of punchers here, too, including Puerto Rico's Jose Badillo and Colombia's Victor Polo and Ever Beleno. And watch out for Texan Jesus Chavez.

Think About It: Putting Hamed's win over Johnson in perspective: Divisions as light as featherweight aren't meant for the graybeards. So it was unusual that at the start of 1997, the three reigning 126-pound champs (Johnson, Espinosa, and Vazquez) averaged 32 years of age. Consider that at the start of 1992, the average age of the feather titlists (Paul Hodkinson, Yung Kyun Park, Manuel Medina) was 25; the average age at the start of '87 (Azumah Nelson, Steve Cruz, Tonito Rivera) was 25; the average age at the start of '82 (Salvador Sanchez and Eusebio Pedroza) was 25. Hamed's age when he beat Johnson: 22.

JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHT

Best Puncher
Junior Jones

Best Boxer
Antonio Cermeno

Most Protected
Vuyani Bungu

Is He *Still* Around?
Vincenzo Belcastro

Matchmaker's Dream
Junior Jones-Marco A. Barrera II

Best-Kept Secret
Angel Chacon

Deserves A Title Shot
Erik Morales

Most Fun To Watch
Marco Antonio Barrera

On The Way Down
Kennedy McKinney

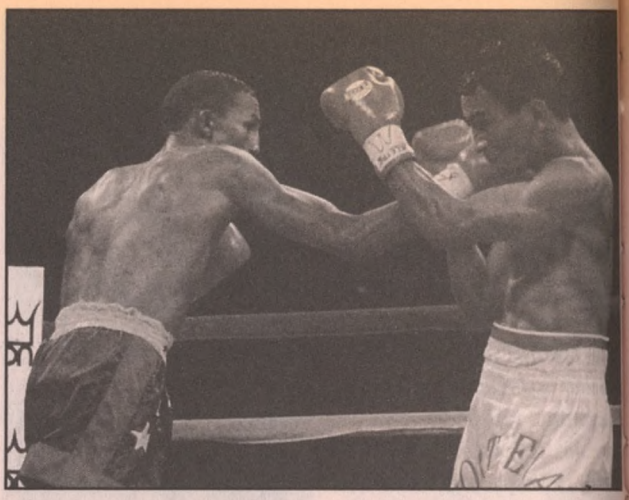
Underrated
Daniel Zaragoza (forever so)

Best Fight In 1996
Marco A. Barrera KO 12 Kennedy McKinney

JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHTS

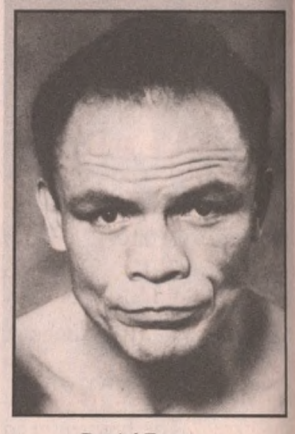
In 1993, then-IBF king Kennedy McKinney spoke of breaking Wilfredo Gomez' division record of 17 successful defenses. As tough as this division has become, neither champs nor challengers dare consider more than one fight at a time. When a supposedly faded Junior Jones can knock out unbeaten pound-for-pound entrant and legend-to-be Marco Antonio Barrera ... When WBC titlist Daniel Zaragoza, who's older than the Mayan ruins, can reject the spirited challenge of Wayne McCullough ... Clearly, there's more talent here than at just about any other weight.

IBF boss Vuyani Bungu, who as we went to press was scheduled to defend against McKinney, and WBA champ Antonio Cermeno are underpublicized and underrated. In addition, there are plenty of champions-to-be, including Erik Morales, and, one step below, Enrique Sanchez, Angel Chacon, and Nestor Garza. If any of the kids get cocky, let's throw 'em in with still-formi-



Antonio Cermeno stuns Yober Ortega

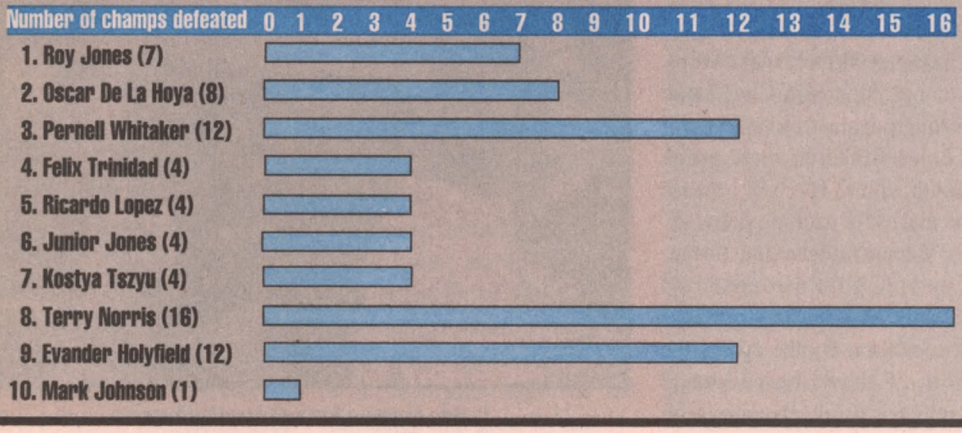
Junior Jones



Daniel Zaragoza

CHAMPS vs. CHAMPS

One way to determine the quality of a fighter's opposition is to count the number of world champions he's defeated. We considered the 10 fighters listed in THE RING's pound-for-pound ratings. The totals:



dable veterans Welcome Ncita or Jesus Salud. As skinny as junior feathers can be, there's no such thing as a free lunch at 122 pounds.

Think About It: Continuing our one-fight-at-a-time theme, consider the career of New York's Jones, who has been "Poison" to handicappers. How do you figure a fighter who impressively defeats Jorge Eliecer Julio (26-0 at the time), Orlando Canizales (42-2-1), and Barrera (43-0), but loses by knockout to John Michael Johnson (17-4) and Darryl Pinckney (18-18-2)? You figure him to be an awfully exciting fighter to watch.

BANTAMWEIGHTS

The zestfulness of "The Z-Boys" is long gone. The greatness of Jeff Chandler and Lupe Pintor is a mere memory. And Wayne McCullough has moved up. What remains in this once-glorious division is an old Thai champ (Daorung C. Siriwat), a young Thai champ (Sirimongkol Singmanasuk), and a solid but unexciting South African champ (Mbulelo Botile). Mexico should sue.

Actually, Singmanasuk shows promise, but since we'll probably never see him fight, who cares? The banties need an injection of fresh talent. In addition to McCullough, lost to junior featherweight have been pound-for-pound entrants Orlando Canizales, Junior Jones, and Marco Antonio Barrera. Maybe Danny Romero and Johnny Tapia will move up from 115 pounds.

We still believe Jorge Eliecer Julio is championship-caliber. Paulie Ayala could win a title, but ain't no banger. And Cincinnati's talented Tim Austin might as well have disappeared. Help!

Think About It: Has the proliferation of divisions given lighter-weight fighters a convenient excuse to rise in weight? McCullough lasted only 1½ years as WBC champ before vacating. Likewise, other outstanding 118-pound titlists (Jeff Fenech, Raul Perez) abandoned the division after only a couple of years. It makes you appreciate Orlando Canizales, who reigned as IBF boss for 6½ years. Then again, had Canizales been dethroned after one or two years, maybe he would've moved up, too.

JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHTS

In this nondescript division's 17-year history, there have been only two significant fights. The first came in 1984, a unification bout that saw Jiro Watanabe defeat Payao Poontarat. The second was 1991's Fight of the Year, Robert Quiroga's dramatic win over Kid Akeem. Now comes the payoff: Early this summer, IBF champ Danny Romero will finally square off vs. Johnny Tapia in Las Vegas. Romero and Tapia, who are neighbors in Albuquerque, New Mexico, are as fan-friendly as it gets. Better yet, they're a combined 68-1-2, and their styles figure to mesh. From bantam down, this is the best matchup since Michael Carbajal-Chiquita Gonzalez I. Our only complaint: The fight belongs in Albuquerque.

The rest of the action is on the other side of the world. Master boxer and WBC champ

BANTAMWEIGHT

Best Puncher
Jorge Eliecer Julio

Best Boxer
Mbulelo Botile

Most Protected
Tim Austin

Is He *Still* Around?
Greg Richardson

Matchmaker's Dream
Return of the Z-Boys

Best-Kept Secret
Sirimongkol Singmanasuk

Deserves A Title Shot
Jorge Eliecer Julio

Most Fun To Watch
Nana Konadu

On The Way Down
Cuauhtemoc Gomez

Underrated
Veeraphol Sahaprom

Best Fight In 1996
Wayne McCulough W 12
Jose Luis Bueno

JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHT

Best Puncher
Danny Romero

Best Boxer
Hiroshi Kawashima

Most Protected
Gerry Penalosa

Is He *Still* Around?
Kiki Rojas

Matchmaker's Dream
Danny Romero-Johnny Tapia

Best-Kept Secret
Yokthai Sithoar

Deserves A Title Shot
Alimi Goitia

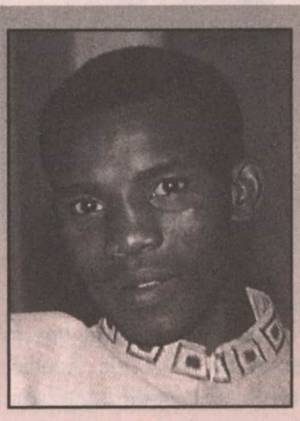
Most Fun To Watch
Johnny Tapia

On The Way Down
Domingo Sosa

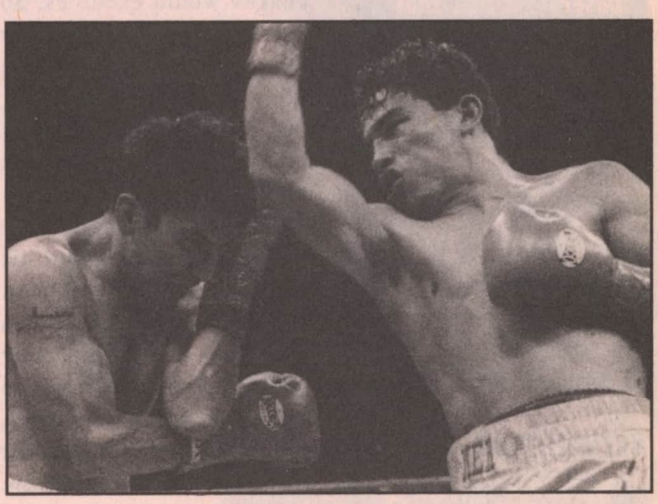
Underrated
Hiroshi Kawashima

Best Fight In 1996
Yokthai Sithoar KO 8
Alimi Goitia

Jorge Eliecer Julio



Mbulelo Botile



Danny Romero goes after Polo Saucedo

Hiroshi Kawashima may be the division's best fighter. WBA champ Yokthai Sithoar is an inexperienced banger. With Khaosai Galaxy still retired, nobody else matters.

Think About It: Forget Cosby, Roseanne, and Seinfeld; Tapia deserves his own TV show. Most junior bantamweights would be thrilled to secure *one* TV date. Tapia's last *14* fights have been nationally televised. He's been on ESPN, HBO, ABC, TVKO, and just about any other letters you can string together. As emotional as he is skilled, Tapia always gives a complete effort. For that reason, he's richly deserving of the heavyweight-sized payday the Romero fight will bring.

FLYWEIGHT

Best Puncher
Yuri Arbachakov

Best Boxer
Mark Johnson

Most Protected
Jesper Jensen

Is He *Still* Around?
Scotty Olson

Matchmaker's Dream
Mark Johnson-Yuri Arbachakov

Best-Kept Secret
Will Grigsby

Deserves A Title Shot
Arthur Johnson

Most Fun To Watch
Miguel Martinez

On The Way Down
Luigi Camputaro

Underrated
Carlos Salazar

Best Fight In 1996
Carlos Salazar KO 10 Alberto Jimenez

FLYWEIGHTS

A unification bout pitting IBF champ Mark Johnson vs. WBC titlist Yuri Arbachakov would excite us. So would a dusk-to-dawn date with Jenny McCarthy. We have a better chance of dinner for two. Johnson and Arbachakov just might be two of the 10 best fighters in the world. The former is a switch-hitting ringmaster who has proved his toughness in wars at the Great Western Forum. The latter is a devastating right-hand puncher who has reigned for almost five years. The third champ, WBA boss Jose Bonilla, wouldn't last five rounds with either of them.

There's decent talent here. The featherfisted Saen Sor Ploenchit is a good bet to regain the WBA title. Another pure boxer, Arthur Johnson, deserves a second title shot. Mexico's best, Alberto Jimenez, should rebound from a surprise loss to ageless Argentine Carlos Salazar. And European champ Jesper Jensen, a southpaw who didn't turn pro until age 26, will be difficult to beat in his native Denmark.

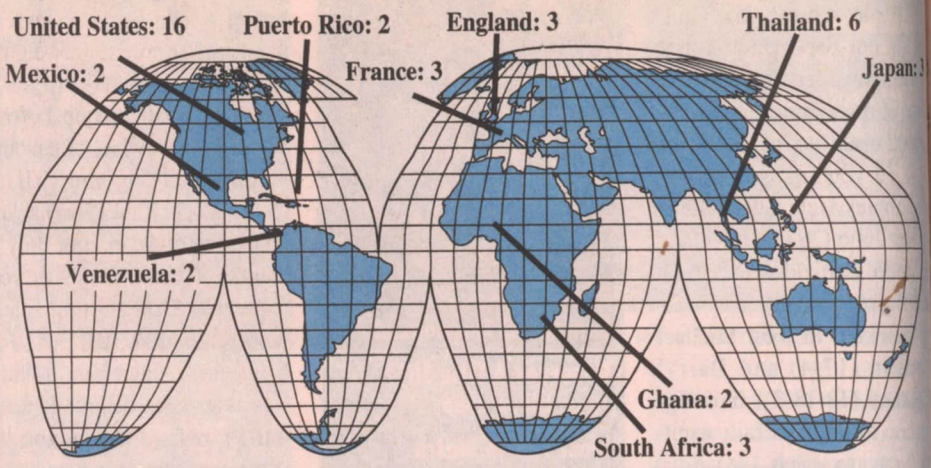
Think About It: You wouldn't think that in nine defenses, eight of which have come at home, Japan-based Russian Arbachakov would have faced only one Japanese challenger. Or that in nine defenses, eight of which came at home, former WBA champ Ploenchit, a Thai, would have faced no Thais. At least no one will ever accuse Mark Johnson of ducking tough American opposition. That's because at 112 pounds, there isn't any tough American opposition.

JUNIOR FLYWEIGHTS

Obscure Colombian Mauricio Pastrana's upset victory over defending IBF champ Michael Carbajal drastically

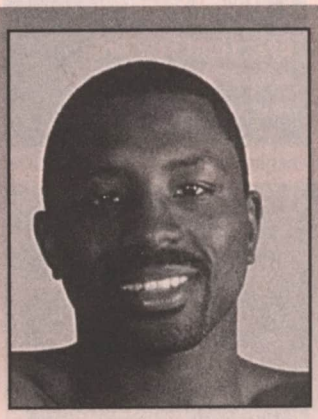
THE CHAMPS BY COUNTRIES

The USA continues to head all nations in the championship roll call, increasing its lead from last year. (Champions as of February 28, 1997.)

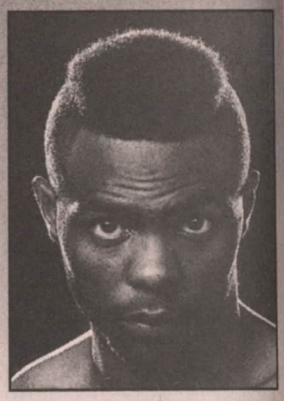


Six countries tied with 1: • Argentina • Australia • Colombia • Nicaragua • Philippines • South Korea

Yuri Arbachakov



Mark Johnson



Arthur Johnson

JUNIOR FLYWEIGHT

Best Puncher
Michael Carbajal

Best Boxer
Melchor Cob Castro

Most Protected
Nelson Dieppa

Is He *Still* Around?
Baby Jake Matlala

Matchmaker's Dream
Michael Carbajal-Ricardo Lopez

Best-Kept Secret
Phichitnoi C. Siriwat

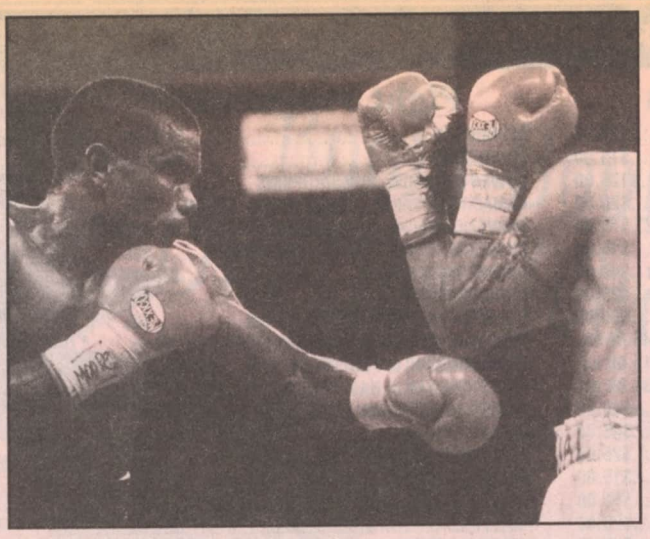
Deserves A Title Shot
Jesus Chong

Most Fun To Watch
Saman Sorjaturong

On The Way Down
Eric Griffin

Underrated
Kaaj Chartbandit

Best Fight In 1996
Keichi Yamaguchi W 12
Carlos Murillo (first fight)



Mauricio Pastrana scores against Michael Carbajal

upset the balance of power at 108 pounds. It was anticipated that the division's next big fight would be Carbajal vs. long-reigning WBC strawweight king Ricardo Lopez. Should Lopez indeed move up, he's now more likely to challenge WBC champ Saman Sorjaturong. That bout would be potentially explosive, but also somewhat anticlimactic; in 1993, Lopez kayoed the Thai in two rounds.

As we went to press, it was anticipated that Carbajal would tackle Canada's Scotty Olson. A rematch with Pastrana would presumably follow.

The WBA champ, lefty Pichitnoi C. Siriwat (formerly Pichitnoi Sithbangprachan) is improving. Veterans like the defensively proficient Melchor Cob Castro and bodypuncher Carlos Murillo are running out of chances. Conversely, when is 32-year-old Mexican Jesus Chong going to get his first shot at a world title? Chong remains a threat, which is more than we can say about one of his 1996 victims, Eric Griffin.

Think About It: While nobody wants to see Carbajal-Chiquita Gonzalez IV, Sorjaturong-Gonzalez II would be a major attraction. (Their first clash was 1995's Fight of the Year.) Trouble is, Chiquita retired last year. However, there are rumors of a comeback. (What a surprise.) If the Mexican does indeed return for vengeance, he'll have to defeat a much-improved Sorjaturong, who made five defenses in '96, scoring four kayos against respectable opposition.

STRAWWEIGHTS

We were going to reprint last year's analysis (WBC champ Ricardo Lopez is wonderful, etc.), but the boss said we had to come up with something new. That ain't easy to do because Lopez is still one of the best fighters in the world—even if he refuses to move up in weight—and the two other champs, Nicaragua's impressive Rosendo Alvarez (WBA) and Thai powerpuncher Ratanapol Sor Vorapin (IBF), remain the same. How dominant were the three titlists in '96? In nine combined defenses, they scored nine kayos.

Forget about the quality contenders. If Lopez, Alvarez, and Sor Vorapin don't move up or struggle to make 105 pounds, they'll each reign for at least another year.

Think About It: At the start of '97, Lopez had made 18 successful defenses. Eight more and he'll break the all-time record of 25 held by Joe Louis. If you thought certain people were upset by Henry Aaron breaking Babe Ruth's homerun record ... ■

STRAWWEIGHT

Best Puncher
Ricardo Lopez

Best Boxer
Ricardo Lopez

Most Protected
Juan Herrera

Is He *Still* Around?
Nico Thomas

Matchmaker's Dream
Ricardo Lopez-Nene Sanchez

Best-Kept Secret
Songkram Porpaoin

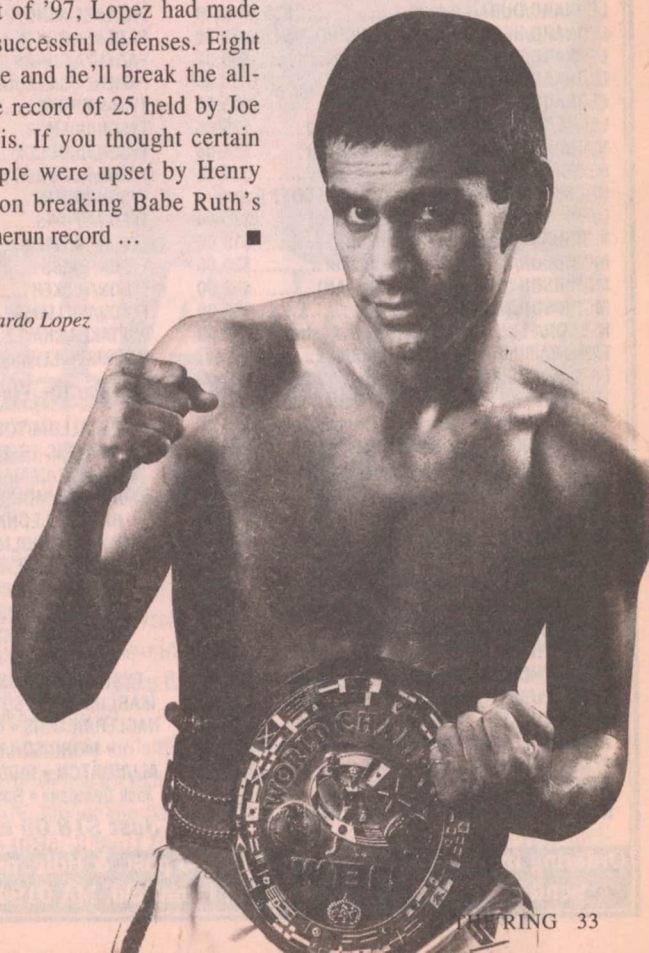
Deserves A Title Shot
Rocky Lin

Most Fun To Watch
Ratanapol Sor Voraphin

On The Way Down
Manny Melchor

Underrated
Rosendo Alvarez

Best Fight In 1996
No Selection



Ricardo Lopez

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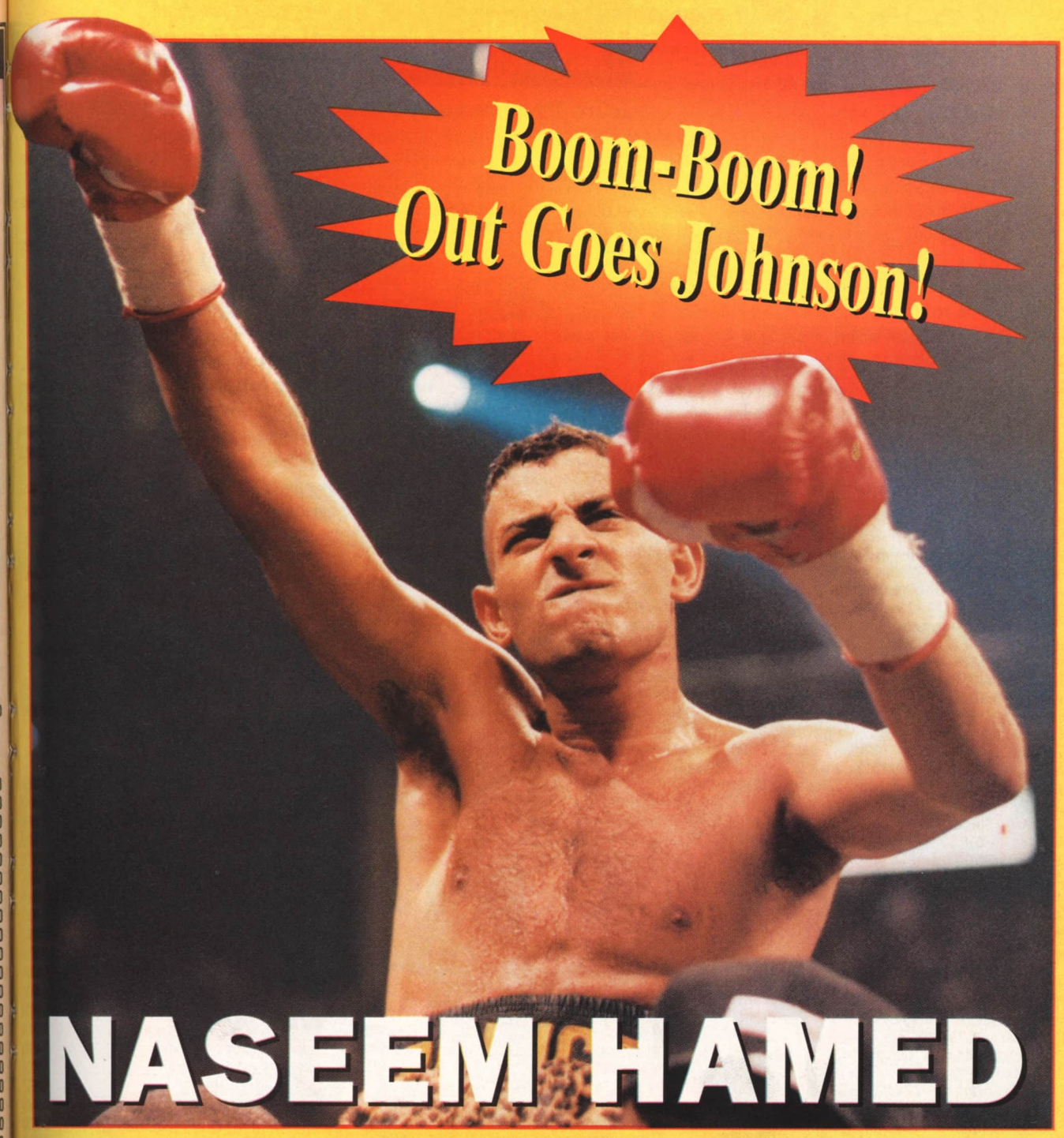


NASEEM HAMED PROVES HE'S FOR REAL!

Photos by Tom Casino/Showtime

By **Brian Doogan**

A dreadlocked madman stands on the summit of a New York skyscraper, proclaiming: "He is coming. You will fall before him." *He* somersaults over the rail of an inbound ship, lands coolly on his feet, and makes off menacingly in a chauffeured black stretch limo.

As the Adidas commercial suggests, *he* is a clinical assassin with a brief to wreak havoc throughout America. *He* is Naseem Hamed, 23-year-old Anglo-Yemeni conglomerate who might be the most complete fighting machine Britain or the Arab world has ever produced.

Certainly he's the most unique, forming and executing punches from angles that would baffle Pythagoras. Hamed's elasticity is only part of the package. Innate power, unquestionably the most prolific in the 126-pound division, and perhaps even two divi-

sions higher, makes him capable of effecting the kind of finishes associated with a wrecking ball. Of his 25 opponents, only two have avoided the fast route back to the dressing room. Peter Buckley was subsequently stopped in two rounds, and the veteran Italian Vincenzo Belcastro endured the kind of sustained 12-round beating that leaves a quick exit the more sensible option.

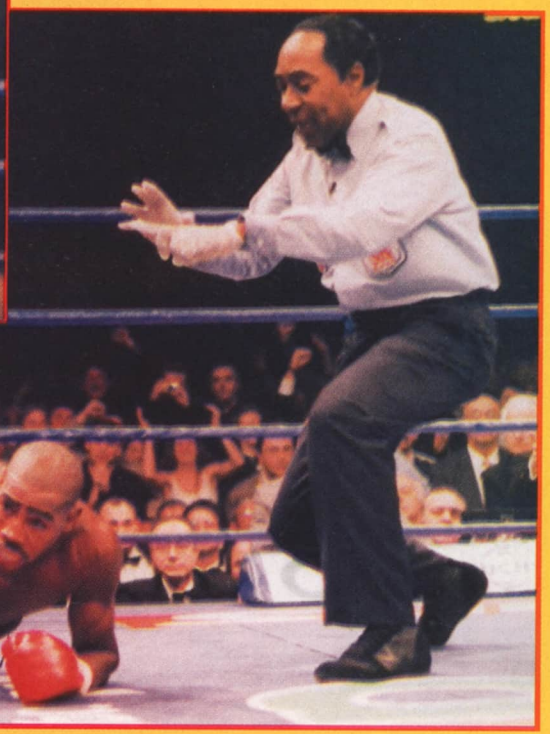
Power like that, of course, comes in handy when fists of another man are causing more harassment than expected. Unbeaten Puerto Rican Daniel Alicea realized this to his cost when, after inflicting the first knockdown of Hamed's career last March, he got nailed in round two and mailed straight back to anonymity. And featherfisted hard man Manuel Medina, whose careful counterpunching style left Hamed confused, and in the minds of some observers exposed, was beaten so badly in the penultimate round that rescuing him before the last stanza was not so much compassionate as inevitable.

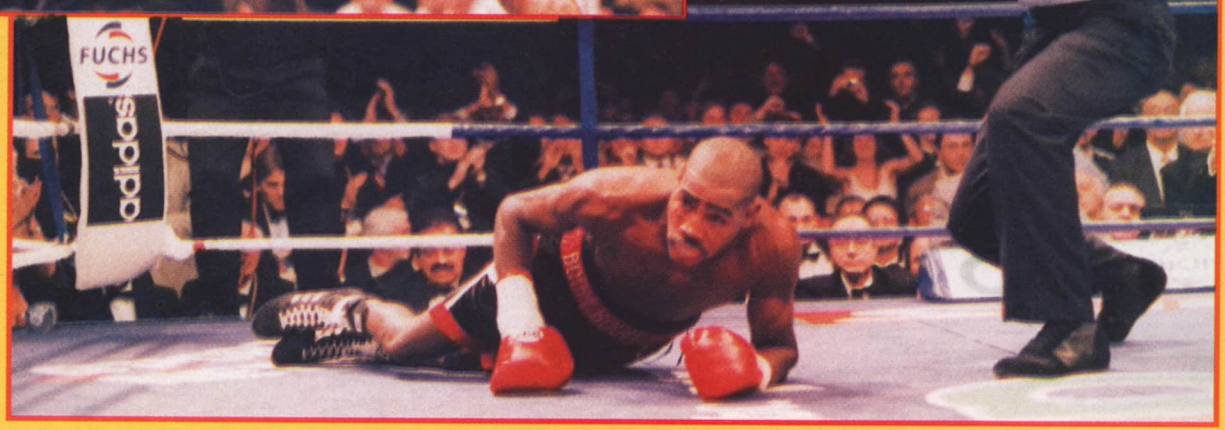
The pivotal component in the Hamed makeup is the divine belief that his passage to the status of legend is already cut in stone. A devout follower of Islam, Hamed considers his fistic virtuosity to be nothing less than the decree of Allah. He has little problems with making commercials that involve a guy shouting maniacally from a rooftop in New York, "*He* is coming, you will fall before him." (It helps, of course, that Adidas pays him to the tune of £4-million to do it.) Nor, as far as Hamed is concerned, is there any conceit. If it were up to him, the broadcaster of such tidings would be one of the prophets. But when you strip it all down to the nitty-gritty, Hamed is a tough sonuvabitch. Or as his Irish manager-trainer Brendan Ingle said, "If you hit him with a mallet, your sympathy should lie with the offending weapon.

"If you chopped his right arm off, he'd tear you to pieces with his left," continued Ingle. "Cut his left arm off, too, and he'll kick you harder than a mule. Amputate his legs and he'll bite yours off as well. Pull out his teeth and he'll gum you into submission. You don't mess with the Naz fella—only if you're a fool."

A £1-million purse, by far the most lucrative of his 10-year career, hardly made IBF featherweight champion Tom Johnson, he of the 11 successful defenses, a fool to mix it with the precocious, but certainly untested (at least at the highest level) Hamed. But after being resoundingly taken apart and then leveled by a cool, hungry, vigorous opponent in eight compelling rounds, his insistence that his performance merited a rematch should lead those who care about him to have a straitjacket handy the next time he dons the gloves. His chances of reversing the score? He might as well change his nickname from "Boom Boom" to

Like so many of Hamed's opponents, Johnson often seemed helpless against The Prince's unorthodox attack. The difference: Johnson was a far better fighter than anyone Hamed had previously faced.





Johnson occasionally reached Hamed—even with his eyes closed (left). But the veteran's conventional attack proved inconsequential, and by round eight, referee Rudy Battle was counting down his reign as IBF champion (below).

"Doomed Doomed." This might equally apply to anyone who plies his trade in or around the 126-pound mark.

"Defeating Tom Johnson, and doing it the way he did, definitely signals the arrival of Naseem Hamed onto the world stage," declared Barry McGuigan, himself a former world featherweight champion, who has developed into a shrewd analyst of the game. "He was very good, and I thought he handled it very well. He went in and tried to blow Johnson out in the first couple of rounds, but when he saw it wasn't going to happen, he adjusted well. He made a damn good attempt at it in the third, but went back to systematically wearing his man down.

"I would still like to see him fight a fresh, young, top-flight fighter before talking about him being in the world pound-for-pound ratings. But I think he's certainly in the top 15, and has the potential to crack the top 10. Despite the fact that some people will say Tom Johnson was damaged goods, you have to acknowledge the way Hamed took him apart. He generates power by fighting in such an unconventional style. No orthodox fighter can do it. He propels himself forward, locking the arm before he throws it. It's a dangerous game, very daring, very reckless. But it makes for spectacular performances.

"Despite what he might think, I like the kid. He's exciting and he puts bums on seats."

This capacity to entertain, as well as chill, both crowds and the opposition renders Hamed a marketable commodity not only in Britain, but in the United States as well.

"Bringing Naseem to the United States is high on our priorities because he's very marketable," confirmed Jay Larkin, the head of Showtime boxing.

Hamed's ring entrance alone justifies his declaration that he is "the undisputed king of razzmatazz." Stood high above 12,500 animated fans at the London Arena on February 8, Hamed suddenly appeared from behind a giant screen on a platform discharging fireworks. Looking for all intents and purposes as if he were about to take the stage for some rock concert, Hamed shimmied to the rhythm of the music before being lowered by crane to the arena floor. He was submerged by his entourage, but regally slipped to the front of the group, almost as if to walk to the ring without the slightest hint of fear as a statement of virility.

"Naseem! Naseem! Naseem!" rose the chorus as he roamed the ring. Johnson looked focused, and Hamed cheekily tried to break his concentration, using the National Anthems to try out a few more of his dance moves.

(Continued on page 56)

THE REMATCH

What It Means For Now ... And Forever

LIVE AT THE MGM GRAND

The Ring PRESENTS

SUPERFIGHT '97

MAIN EVENT–12 ROUNDS

FOR THE WBA WORLD HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPIONSHIP

SATURDAY, MAY 3, 1997

EVANDER

HOLYFIELD

Atlanta, Georgia

WBA HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION

33-3 (24 kayos)

The Ring Fighter Of The Year–1987, 1996

VS

MIKE

TYSON

Southington, Ohio

FORMER WORLD HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION

45-2 (39 kayos)

The Ring Fighter Of The Year–1986, 1988

"THE SOUND AND THE FURY"

EVANDER HOLYFIELD vs. MIKE TYSON
Will This Be A Replay Of November 9?

It is a measure of the public's immense interest that the Evander Holyfield-Mike Tyson rematch is taking place so soon after the original. When "The Real Deal" upset Tyson via 11th-round TKO, it gave the sport a gigantic boost, and fans are hungry for another dose of the same tonic. So hungry that the scheduled 12-rounder has a legitimate chance of being the first $100-million fight in history.

Rematches have seldom lived up to their predecessors, but it's hard to imagine these two warriors creating anything less than another memorable classic. After all, the WBA heavyweight title is not the only thing on the line. Holyfield's and Tyson's ultimate places in boxing history are riding on the outcome. And the stakes certainly don't get any higher than that.

RECORD AND WORLD RATING

HOLYFIELD: Is 33-3 with 24 knockouts … Turned pro in November 1984 after winning a bronze medal at the '84 Olympics … Captured WBA cruiserweight title in 12th pro fight … Won IBF cruiser crown in May '87 … Unified 190-pound title by annexing WBC belt in April '88 … Won undisputed heavyweight title in October '90 … Lost unified heavyweight title in November '92 … Regained WBA/IBF titles in November '93 … Lost WBA/IBF belts in April '94 … Regained WBA title in November '96 … Is ranked first at heavyweight by THE RING.

TYSON: Is 45-2 with 39 knockouts … Turned pro in March 1985 … Won WBC heavyweight title in November '86 … Won WBA belt in March '87 … Unified heavyweight crown by winning IBF belt in August '87 … Lost unified title in February '90 … Regained WBC title in March '96 … Regained WBA belt in September '96 … Lost WBA title in November '96 … Is ranked third at heavyweight by THE RING.

Holyfield overwhelms Czyz in five

AGE AND PHYSICAL EQUIPMENT

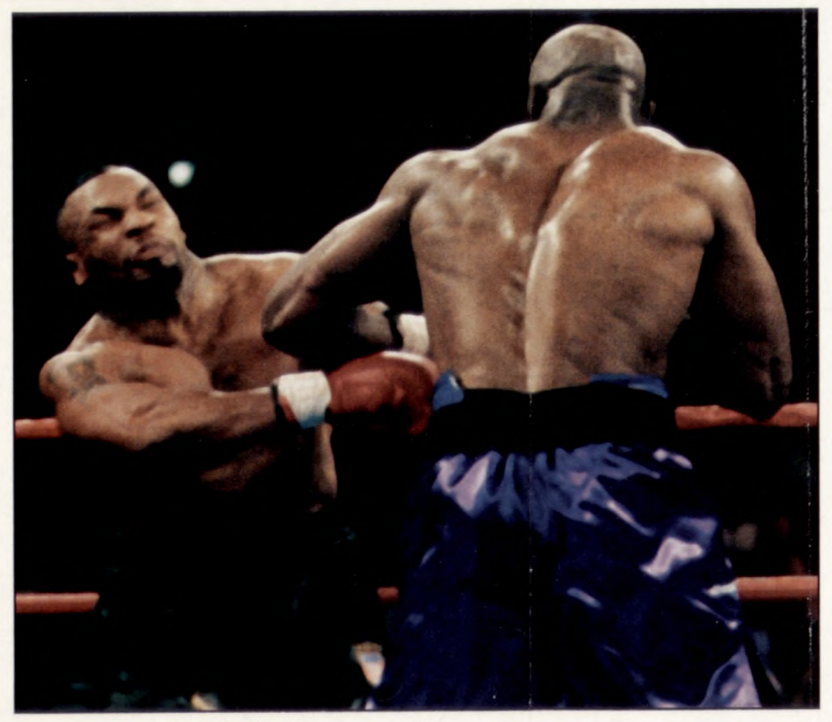
HOLYFIELD: A perfectly proportioned 34 … Stands 6'2" with a 77½-inch reach … Alleged heart ailment proved nonexistent, but reoccurring shoulder injuries have hampered him in the past … Among the first boxers to utilize high-tech training methods, resulting in an Adonis-like physique.

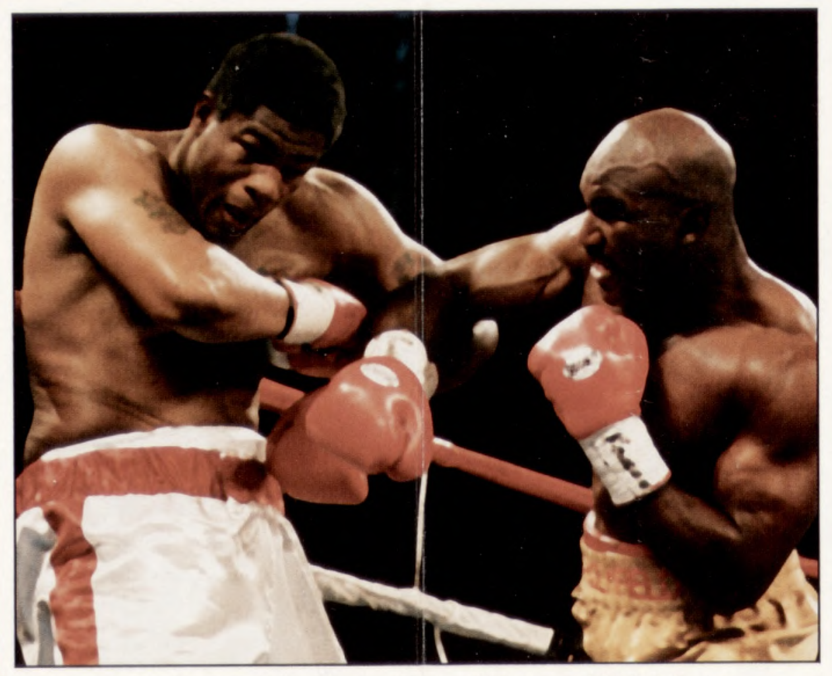
TYSON: Former teenage terror is now 30 … Is 5'11½" tall with a 71-inch wingspan … Has a compact, muscular body, capable of generating awesome power … Susceptibility to training injuries has led to several postponements … Seems to have conquered old habit of blowing up in weight between bouts.

BEST WEAPON

HOLYFIELD: Courage, determination, and strong religious conviction … Floored Riddick Bowe, Ray Mercer, and Tyson with just one left hook apiece … Scored one-punch kayo of Buster Douglas with right cross … Rediscovered punishing jab in Tyson fight.

TYSON: Has more than enough power in either hand to turn a fight around with one punch … His double right uppercut, first to the body and then to the head, is one of the most destructive combinations in boxing … In the past, intimidation has been as great a weapon as his fists.


Holyfield's victory over Tyson was an eye-opener


Evander was only able to win one of three vs. Riddick Bowe

PREVIOUS FIGHT

HOLYFIELD: Tallied 11th-round TKO of Tyson in one of the biggest upsets in heavyweight history … Shook off first-round bomb to dominate the fight with intelligent boxing and sharp counters … Had Tyson out on his feet at the end of the 10th, and finished the job 37 seconds into the next round.

TYSON: Baddest-man-on-the-planet reputation took as big a beating as he did against Holyfield … Was unable to cope with Commander Vander's savvy boxing and unerring counters … Went down from bodyshot in the sixth … Suffered deep cut in the corner of his left eye due to accidental headbutt.

QUALITY OF OPPOSITION

HOLYFIELD: Has tangled with practically every top-notch cruiser and heavyweight of the past 10 years … Losses to Bowe (L 12, KO by 8) and Michael Moorer (L 12) have been offset by wins over Dwight Qawi (W 15, KO 4), George Foreman (W 12), Larry Holmes (W 12), Douglas (KO 3), Bowe (W 12), Mercer (W 10), and Tyson (KO 11).

TYSON: He's never ducked anybody, and outside of Holyfield and Douglas, has dominated the division with victories over Trevor Berbick (KO 2), Bonecrusher Smith (W 12), Pinklon Thomas (KO 6), Holmes (KO 4), Tyrell Biggs (KO 7), Michael Spinks (KO 1), Frank Bruno (KO 5, KO 3), and Razor Ruddock (KO 7, W 12).

Frank Bruno twice withered under Tyson's assault

DEFENSE

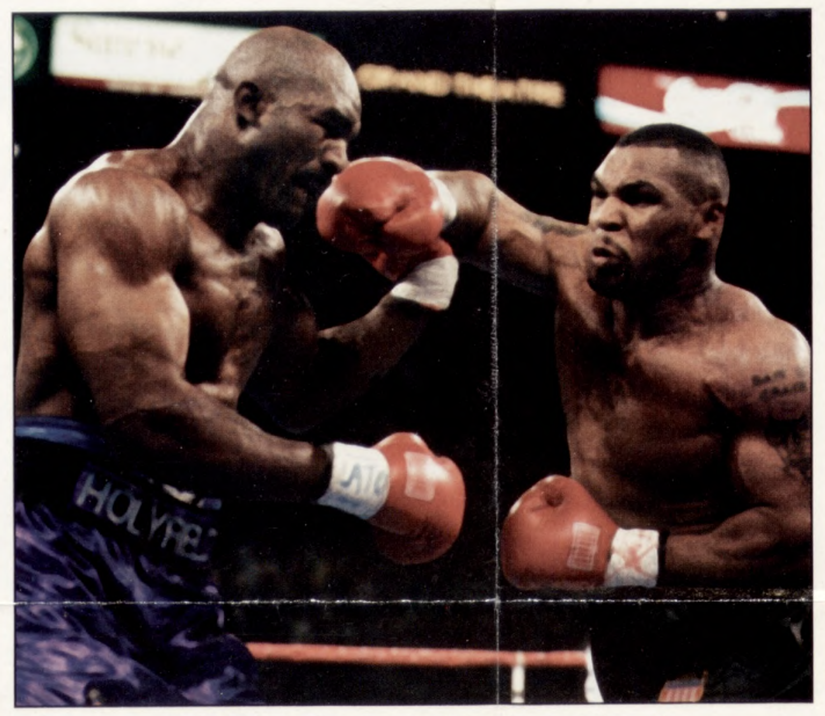
HOLYFIELD: While never regarded as a defensive genius, he pretty much shut down Tyson's vaunted attack by giving him angles and clinching at opportune times … Aside from the third Bowe fight, when he was weakened by a virus, durable chin has enabled him to survive defensive lapses.

TYSON: A classic proponent of the good-offense-is-the-best-defense school who relies on opponents being too busy protecting themselves to mount much of an offense … Upper body movement that once made him a difficult target has all but disappeared in recent years … Chin is sturdy, but not infallible.

STYLE

HOLYFIELD: A boxer who loves to slug … Showed uncharacteristic discipline against Tyson, but battle plans have been frequently scuttled when foe connects with a big shot … Impressive combination-puncher … Excellent finisher once he has his man in trouble.

TYSON: Super-aggressive stalker … Goes for the knockout with practically every shot … Pulverizing bodypuncher … Rips the uppercut on the inside with ruinous effect … Seems to run out of ideas when adversary stands up to his bullying tactics … Easily lulled into clinches.


Holyfield stood up to everything Tyson delivered

THE QUESTIONS

HOLYFIELD: Is he rushing into the rematch without having adequate time to rest his body and rekindle his emotional batteries? Will he be overconfident, and fail to train as diligently as he did the first time? Is it unrealistic to think that everything will fall into place as perfectly as it did last November? Does he need a new battle plan or will the same one work again?

TYSON: Has he learned anything from the first fight? Will new trainer Richie Giachetti make a difference? Will the memory of the first fight haunt him or push him to greater heights? Has the Tyson image been a mirage or is he really the baddest man on the planet?

Bruce Seldon was victimized by the Tyson mystique

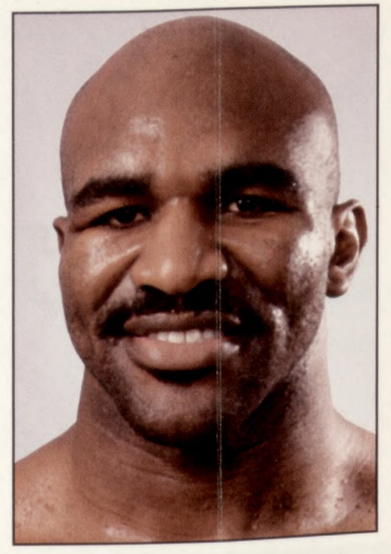
THE OUTCOME

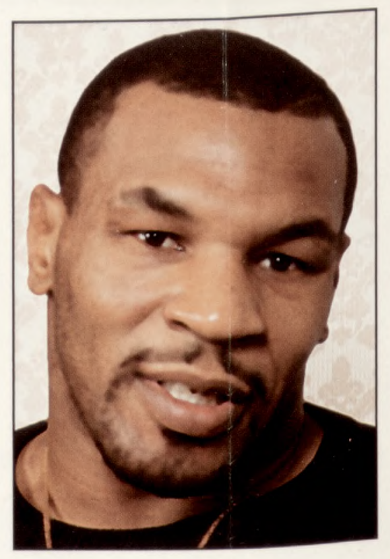
Tyson tries to establish his dominance from the opening bell, attacking fiercely with lunging hooks and whistling overhand rights. Holyfield avoids most of the onslaught and answers back with movement, jabs, and thudding rights. Only a small percentage of Tyson's bombs find the target, and his snarl is soon replaced by a look of frustration. In the fifth, Holyfield counters a wild right with a crushing left hook. *Boom!* Tyson lands on his back with a resounding thud, sending a cloud of rosin dust into the air. The challenger is on his feet by the count of seven, and bravely wades back into the fray. Holyfield takes his time, refusing to be drawn into a slugging match. But when he sees an opening late in the round, Commander Vander unleashes a withering barrage, punctuated by another hook. Tyson staggers backward, and is caught and rescued by the referee before he has a chance to topple over.

FIGHT FACTS

TALE OF THE TAPE

HOLYFIELD		TYSON
October 19, 1962	**Birthdate**	June 30, 1966
Atmore, AL	**Birthplace**	Brooklyn, NY
Atlanta, GA	**Hometown**	Southington, OH
34	**Age**	30
215	**Weight**	222
6'2½"	**Height**	5'11"
77½"	**Reach**	71"
43"	**Chest (Normal)**	43"
45"	**Chest (Expanded)**	45"
16"	**Biceps**	16"
12½"	**Forearm**	14"
32"	**Waist**	34"
22"	**Thigh**	27"
13"	**Calf**	19"
19½"	**Neck**	20½"
7½"	**Wrist**	8"
12½"	**Fist**	13"
10"	**Ankle**	11"





Champion: Evander Holyfield
Challenger: Mike Tyson
Title: WBA heavyweight
Distance: 12 rounds
Date: Saturday, May 3
Place: MGM Grand Garden, Las Vegas
Promoter: Don King
Holyfield's Trainers: Don Turner, Tommy Brooks
Tyson's Trainer: Richie Giachetti
Purses: Holyfield–$35-million; Tyson–$20-million
Ticket Prices: $200 to $1,500
Television: U.S.–SET pay-per-view; U.K.–BSkyB
Holyfield's view: "People said I couldn't do what I did. I want to prove again that anything can be accomplished if it's done for the greater honor and glory of Jesus."
Tyson's view: "I'm going to win the title for a third time. I just had a bad night … If he beats me this time, he'll beat me at the best I've ever been."

Photographers
Jason Ross Lavin,
Bill Apter,
Al Bello/Allsport,
Simon Bruty/Allsport

ALL-COLOR FIGHT SPECIAL

FAN'S GUIDE TO THE HOLYFIELD-TYSON REMATCH

THE RING

RING RECORDS OF BOTH HEAVYWEIGHTS

BIG FIGHT COLOR SPECIAL #9

HOLYFIELD vs. TYSON

- THE RING'S PREVIEW & PICK
- MAGNIFICENT COLOR ACTION PHOTOS OF BOTH FIGHTERS
- FIGHT FACTS & INSIDE NEWS

SUPPLEMENT TO THE RING

The Professional Record of Evander Holyfield
33-3 (24)

1984
Nov. 15 Lionel Byarm, New York City .... W 6
1985
Jan. 20 Eric Winbush, Atlantic City .... W 6
March 13 Fred Brown, Norfolk, VA .... KO 1
April 20 Mark Rivera, Corpus Christi, TX .... KO 2
July 20 Tyrone Booze, Norfolk .... W 8
Aug. 29 Rick Myers, Atlanta .... KO 1
Oct. 30 Jeff Meachem, Atlantic City .... KO 5
Dec. 21 Anthony Davis, Virginia Beach .... KO 4
1986
March 1 Chisanda Mutti, Lancaster, PA .... KO 3
April 6 Jesse Shelby, Corpus Christi .... KO 3
May 28 Terry Mims, Mataire, LA .... KO 5
July 12 Dwight Qawi, Atlanta .... W 15
(Wins WBA Cruiserweight Title)
Dec. 8 Mike Brothers, Paris .... KO 3
(Non-Title Bout)
1987
Feb. 14 Henry Tillman, Reno .... KO 7
(Retains WBA Cruiserweight Title)
May 15 Rickey Parkey, Las Vegas .... KO 3
(Retains WBA Cruiserweight Title; Wins IBF Title)
Aug. 15 Ossie Ocasio, St. Tropez, France .... KO 11
(Retains WBA & IBF Cruiserweight Titles)
Dec. 5 Dwight Qawi, Atlantic City .... KO 4
(Retains WBA & IBF Cruiserweight Titles)
1988
April 9 Carlos DeLeon, Las Vegas .... KO 8
(Unifies Cruiserweight Title)
July 16 James Tillis, Stateline, NV .... KO 5
Dec. 9 Pinklon Thomas, Atlantic City .... KO 7
1989
March 11 Michael Dokes, Las Vegas .... KO 10
July 15 Adilson Rodrigues, Stateline .... KO 2
Nov. 4 Alex Stewart, Atlantic City .... KO 8
1990
June 1 Seamus McDonagh, Atlantic City .... KO 4
Oct. 25 Buster Douglas, Las Vegas .... KO 3
(Wins Unified Heavyweight Title)
1991
April 19 George Foreman, Atlantic City .... W 12
(Retains Unified Heavyweight Title)
Nov. 23 Bert Cooper, Atlanta .... KO 7
(Retains WBA & IBF Heavyweight Titles)
1992
June 19 Larry Holmes, Las Vegas .... W 12
(Retains Unified Heavyweight Title)
Nov. 13 Riddick Bowe, Las Vegas .... L 12
(Loses Unified Heavyweight Title)
1993
June 26 Alex Stewart, Atlantic City .... W 12
Nov. 6 Riddick Bowe, Las Vegas .... W 12
(Regains WBA & IBF Heavyweight Titles)
1994
April 22 Michael Moorer, Las Vegas .... L 12
(Loses WBA & IBF Heavyweight Titles)
1995
May 20 Ray Mercer, Atlantic City .... W 10
Nov. 4 Riddick Bowe, Las Vegas .... KO by 8
1996
May 10 Bobby Czyz, New York City .... KO 5
Nov. 9 Mike Tyson, Las Vegas .... KO 11
(Regains WBA Heavyweight Title)

FIGHTS	WON	LOST	DREW	KO
36	33	3	0	24

The Professional Record of Mike Tyson
45-2 (39)

1985
March 6 Hector Mercedes, Albany, NY .... KO 1
April 10 Trenton Singleton, Albany .... KO 1
May 23 Don Halpin, Albany .... KO 4
June 20 Rick Spain, Atlantic City .... KO 1
July 11 John Alderson, Atlantic City .... KO 2
July 17 Larry Sims, Poughkeepsie, NY .... KO 3
Aug. 15 Lorenzo Canady, Atlantic City .... KO 1
Sept. 5 Michael Johnson, Atlantic City .... KO 1
Oct. 9 Donnie Long, Atlantic City .... KO 1
Oct. 25 Robert Colay, Atlantic City .... KO 1
Nov. 1 Sterling Benjamin, Latham, NY .... KO 1
Nov. 13 Eddie Richardson, Houston, TX .... KO 1
Nov. 22 Conroy Nelson, Latham .... KO 2
Dec. 6 Sammy Scaff, New York City .... KO 1
Dec. 27 Mark Young, Albany .... KO 1
1986
Jan. 11 Dave Jaco, Albany .... KO 1
Jan. 24 Mike Jameson, Atlantic City .... KO 5
Feb. 16 Jesse Ferguson, Troy, NY .... KO 6
March 10 Steve Zouski, Uniondale, NY .... KO 3
May 3 James Tillis, Glens Falls, NY .... W 10
May 20 Mitch Green, New York City .... W 10
June 13 Reggie Gross, New York City .... KO 1
June 28 William Hosea, Troy .... KO 1
July 11 Lorenzo Boyd, Swan Lake, NY .... KO 2
July 26 Marvis Frazier, Glens Falls .... KO 1
Aug. 17 Jose Ribalta, Atlantic City .... KO 10
Sept. 6 Alfonzo Ratliff, Las Vegas .... KO 2
Nov. 22 Trevor Berbick, Las Vegas .... KO 2
(Wins WBC Heavyweight Title)
1987
March 7 Bonecrusher Smith, Las Vegas .... W 12
(Retains WBC Heavyweight Title; Wins WBA Title)
May 30 Pinklon Thomas, Las Vegas .... KO 6
(Retains WBC & WBA Heavyweight Titles)
Aug. 1 Tony Tucker, Las Vegas .... W 12
(Unifies Heavyweight Title)
Oct. 16 Tyrell Biggs, Atlantic City .... KO 7
(Retains Unified Heavyweight Title)
1988
Jan. 22 Larry Holmes, Atlantic City .... KO 4
(Retains Unified Heavyweight Title)
March 21 Tony Tubbs, Tokyo .... KO 2
(Retains WBC & WBA Heavyweight Titles)
June 27 Michael Spinks, Atlantic City .... KO 1
(Retains Unified Heavyweight Title)
1989
Feb. 25 Frank Bruno, Las Vegas .... KO 5
(Retains Unified Heavyweight Title)
July 21 Carl Williams, Atlantic City .... KO 1
(Retains Unified Heavyweight Title)
1990
Feb. 11 Buster Douglas, Tokyo .... KO by 10
(Loses Unified Heavyweight Title)
June 16 Henry Tillman, Las Vegas .... KO 1
Dec. 8 Alex Stewart, Atlantic City .... KO 1
1991
March 18 Razor Ruddock, Las Vegas .... KO 7
June 28 Razor Ruddock, Las Vegas .... W 12
1995
Aug. 19 Peter McNeeley, Las Vegas .... W Disq. 1
Dec. 16 Buster Mathis Jr., Philadelphia .... KO 3
1996
March 16 Frank Bruno, Las Vegas .... KO 3
(Regains WBC Heavyweight Title)
Sept. 7 Bruce Seldon, Las Vegas .... KO 1
(Regains WBA Heavyweight Title)
Nov. 9 Evander Holyfield, Las Vegas .... KO by 11
(Loses WBA Heavyweight Title)

FIGHTS	WON	LOST	DREW	KO
47	45	2	0	39

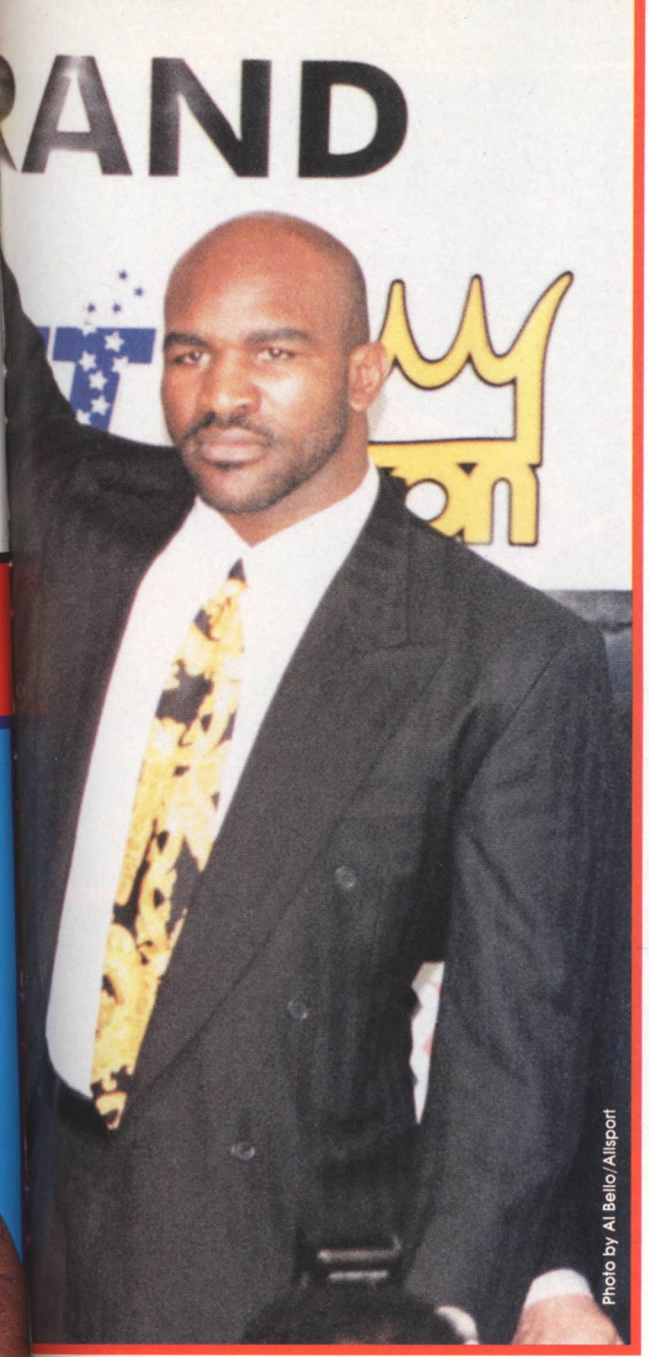


Photo by Al Bello/Allsport

By Greg Logan

For a fighter who sought greatness but was forced to spend most of his career defending himself against the skeptics, nothing could have been more deeply satisfying to Evander Holyfield than his conquest of Mike Tyson, the man and the myth. Holyfield described the victory as a testament to the power of his faith in God, but it was equally symbolic of Holyfield's faith in himself and the power of his courage. His 11th-round TKO of Tyson last November stamped Holyfield forever as boxing's Braveheart.

Tyson represented the chance for Holyfield to validate his place in boxing history. The more fearsome Tyson seemed, the better it was for Holyfield when he punctured the aura of invincibility once and for all. In the bargain, Holyfield was especially proud to say, he joined Muhammad Ali as the only three-time heavyweight champions in history.

Say what you will about the cheap price of titles these days, but Holyfield beat the man he had to beat in order to be regarded as the best heavyweight of his era, and to take a place alongside Ali in the recordbooks. It doesn't get much better than that. Holyfield can start printing invitations to his induction into the International Boxing Hall of Fame without much regard for what happens in the rematch, scheduled for May 3 at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas.

"I've got nothing to prove," Holyfield said at the New York City press conference announcing the return bout. "I could have said I don't have to fight again, and the world would have accepted it. I could have said, 'I'm out of here,' and people would have started laughing and clapping. I'm in a no-lose situation."

Holyfield being Holyfield, it's to his credit that he wants to show he can do it again, that he can make it a win-win situation. If anything, the challenge for him is to demonstrate greater consistency. The last time Holyfield had the title, he fought with a shoulder injury and gave it away in his first defense, against Michael Moorer.

Without question, Tyson has the most to lose in the rematch. He came out of prison after serving three years for a rape conviction, then regained the WBC and WBA titles over opponents whose names—Frank Bruno and Bruce Seldon—have come to read like the punchlines of a bad joke. Only the boxing public wasn't laughing, as it did for Tyson's comeback bout against designated fall guy Peter McNeeley.

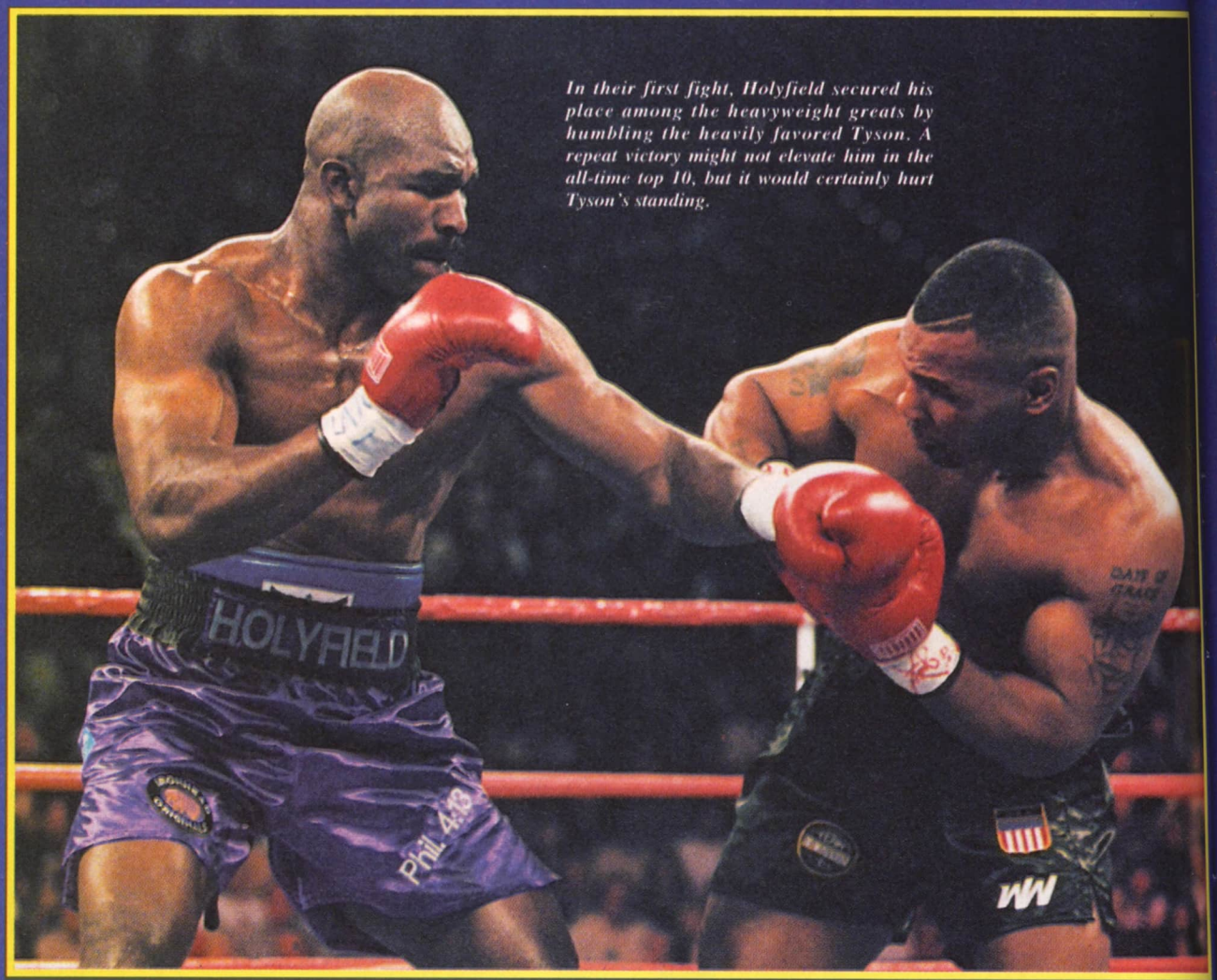
John Horne, Tyson's co-manager, admitted Holyfield, thought by many to be a shot fighter, was signed as an opponent for his name value. "If Mike had obliterated Holyfield," Horne said, "Holyfield's whole history would have been erased. Because of the way Holyfield went downhill in his previous fights (losses to Moorer and Riddick Bowe, and struggling wins over Ray Mercer and Bobby Czyz), his greatness would have been out the door. Holyfield resurrected not just himself, but his whole history."

The roles are reversed now. Holyfield's astonishing dominance has called into question the status Tyson achieved as the youngest heavyweight champion in history and as a knockout puncher on the cusp of ranking with the all-time greats before he went to prison.

When asked how a loss would affect him, Tyson downplayed the importance of the rematch, and answered with some disdain: "I don't know; you tell me." Exaggerating his wealth, as if to say only money matters, he added, "I'm going to make $100-million to $150-million this year." But Tyson later admitted he wants to join Holyfield and Ali as a three-time champion.

Said Horne, "Mike has a challenge now. I'm not worried about Mike training; I'm not worried about him getting up every morning to run; I'm not worried about him missing two or three days a week or being only half-there. Mike is going to be in great shape. If Holyfield beats that Mike Tyson, then there's nothing you can say. They both have come to a point where nobody thought they would be."

Even if Tyson wins, it will be only the first step on a long road to rehabilitating his reputation. In the arrogance of youth, Tyson once said of his opponents, "How dare they challenge me with their primitive skills." But against Holyfield, it was Tyson whose



In their first fight, Holyfield secured his place among the heavyweight greats by humbling the heavily favored Tyson. A repeat victory might not elevate him in the all-time top 10, but it would certainly hurt Tyson's standing.

skills were revealed as crude and deficient.

Cus D'Amato harnessed Tyson's rage and created a monster, but he forgot to teach the monster to box and adjust when his opponent, instead of falling down, began hitting back, as Holyfield and Buster Douglas did. As veteran trainer Tommy Gallagher observed, it's as though D'Amato put Tyson on a set of railroad tracks and sent him forward to overwhelm his prey. When that doesn't work, Tyson has no other plan except to tough it out and keep looking for a knockout shot.

Before Holyfield-Tyson I, trainer Eddie Futch expressed doubts about whether Tyson could be the same fearsome knockout puncher he had been in his pre-prison days. After seeing Tyson's performance against Holyfield, Futch said, "He never could box, but he could knock people out." Even among the ranks of knockout punchers, Futch said Tyson takes a backseat to a champion like George Foreman because "George can box a little bit. Foreman [in his prime] would beat Tyson for the same reasons he beat Joe Frazier—because he's too short and because of his style."

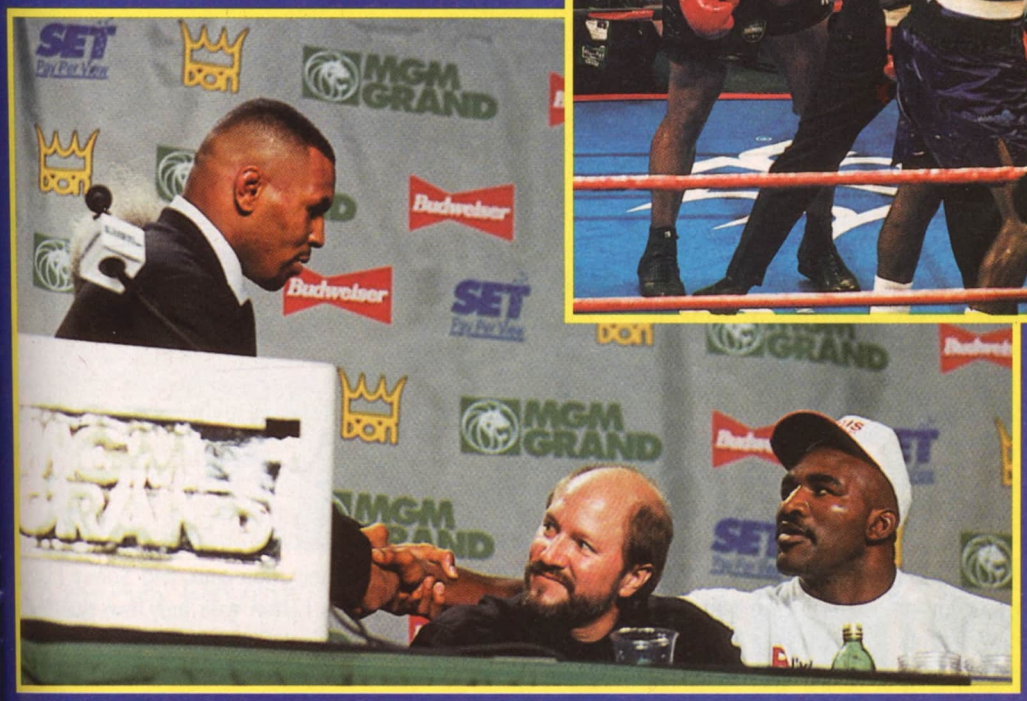
Unless he beats Holyfield and manages to rebuild his stature with wins over quality opponents in the second act of his career, Tyson may be remembered more as a marketing and cultural phenomenon than for his boxing accomplishments. His kayos together with his tumultuous personal life turned him into a soap-opera celebrity even before his rape conviction. His court case became a political and social *cause celebre* for many in the African-American community, and that contributed significantly to the frenzy that greeted Tyson when he came out of prison.

Tyson's return generated so much interest that it made him the richest athlete in the world in 1996. In five fights since his release, he's "earned" $105-million. He will receive a minimum of $20-million for the rematch. Holyfield's guaranteed purse of $35-million will make it the richest single sporting event in history.

"Tyson is going to go down as a great product of smart people, from Cus D'Amato, Jimmy Jacobs, and Bill Cayton to Don King," said trainer Emanuel Steward, referring to Tyson's original management team and current promoter. "To be the top-paid athlete without doing any endorsements is unbelievable, especially coming from the crime that put him in jail, whether he did it or not. He didn't even have a real fight before Holyfield. If Tyson doesn't win the rematch, his career will be one of the greatest examples of professional hype in history."

Once considered a candidate to rate among the all-time greats, Tyson in his current state doesn't come close to cracking the top-10 heavyweight champions, at least in the view of most longtime boxing experts.

Futch said Tyson would just make it into his top 20. Former



Referee Mitch Halpern intervenes in the 11th round, ending one of the greatest upsets in boxing history (right). Afterward, Tyson was respectful of Holyfield (below). In the rematch, he should be the hungrier fighter. But will that make a difference?

Madison Square Garden promoter Harry Markson, 91, said, "I don't think his record is as impressive as his knockouts make it appear. He's not a complete fighter. You have to have more than a solid punch. I don't rank him among the great heavyweights of modern times. He'd have to do considerably more."

Legendary former Garden matchmaker Teddy Brenner, 79, added, "I consider Tyson a great puncher, not a great fighter. He's like Earnie Shavers. He doesn't have boxing skills because he's never taken the time to learn." But Brenner hasn't written Tyson off completely as an all-time top-10 heavyweight champion. "I want to wait until his career is over to judge," he said. "He has a chance to become one of the best. Joe Louis got knocked out and came back to be invincible."

While Holyfield's place in history as the best of an era in which paper champions have proliferated is secure, his victory over Tyson made a space at the fringe of the top-10 rankings. Futch and trainer George Benton each put Holyfield about 10th and said he would have lost to the likes of Ezzard Charles and Jersey Joe Walcott, both of whom are often overlooked because they suffered double-digit losses and were sandwiched between Joe Louis and Rocky Marciano.

"Holyfield's not in the top 10," Brenner stated flatly. "He doesn't punch hard enough. He couldn't lick Charles or Walcott. Charles wasn't really big enough to be a heavyweight, and neither is Holyfield. If he won three titles, it's because there are 20 versions of the heavyweight title."

Almost reluctantly, Markson said Holyfield rates top-10 consideration. But he quickly added, "He's not in the top half-dozen. He's a good fighter and was superb in his last fight. But he has to extend his career to be among the greats."

Identifying the real source of Holyfield's appeal, Markson said, "He has a great capacity to take a punch. He took some mighty wallops from Tyson. Few fighters of our time are capable of withstanding that kind of punishment. They look for the easy way out."

Having given Holyfield his due, the skeptics are now looking to see if he's capable of duplicating his performance in the first Tyson fight. In his first run as undisputed champion, Holyfield made three successful defenses, but had to go all-out to win 12-round decisions over former champions Foreman and Larry Holmes, both of whom were far past there primes. He was also knocked down by journeyman Bert Cooper. He lost the title to Bowe and won only the second of their three-fight series.

"Holyfield's reign has been spotty," Steward said. "He wins and loses, wins the title back and loses it to Moorer, and then gets knocked out by Bowe. Winning the title three times is special, but

A SECOND CHANCE

Exactly one member of the boxing media, Ron Borges of the *Boston Globe* and *Boxing 97*, picked Evander Holyfield to defeat Mike Tyson last November. Everyone else got it wrong. Here's a second chance for some of the beat writers.

Ron Borges, Boston Globe: "No pick—I'm resting on my laurels. No, huh? Okay, Holyfield is still bigger, still stronger, still better. He'll take what Tyson dishes out, which will be considerable, and he'll give back in kind. Holyfield by ninth-round kayo."

Ed Schuyler, Associated Press: "It's hard to judge the consistency of old fighters. I don't know whether this fight is as much of a challenge for Holyfield now that he's already beaten Tyson. It's not a must-win situation for Holyfield, but it sure is for Tyson. Tyson by decision."

Bernard Fernandez, Philadelphia Daily News: "For all his talk about being prepared the first time, I think Tyson knows better. This time he'll have professional help in his corner, which was lacking last time. I still remember Holyfield against Bobby Czyz. The Tyson fight might've been a one-shot performance for him. Tyson by eighth-round kayo."

Al Goldstein, Baltimore Sun: "I don't think Holyfield can reach that emotional and physical peak again. Tyson is going to view this fight as more of a crusade. Tyson by 10th-round kayo."

Jay Searcy, Philadelphia Inquirer: "Tyson has a new trainer, and he'll listen this time because he'll realize he needs help. Holyfield can achieve that magic only once. Tyson by ninth-round kayo."

John Phillips, Reuters: "I don't think Holyfield can get up to do it again. Tyson will learn from the first fight and not take it lightly. The fight means more to him. Tyson by fifth-round kayo."

Greg Logan, Newsday: "I'm not sure that after the supreme effort Holyfield put forth last time, he can duplicate that performance. For Tyson, this means everything because it will determine not only how he'll be remembered, but whether there's any chance for him to go on to greatness. Tyson by ninth-round kayo."

Chris Thorne, Newark Star-Ledger, and President of the Boxing Writers of America: "There's not enough time for Tyson to change his ways. Rich Giachetti won't make that much of a difference. I don't see that much changing from the first fight. Holyfield by 10th-round kayo."

Jon Saraceno, USA Today: "The rematch will surpass the first fight in terms of intensity and skill level. Tyson is going to win the title for the third time. Tyson by fourth-round kayo."

Jeff Schultz, Atlanta Constitution: "As the hometown guy, I was fully expected to pick Holyfield the first time. But I didn't because I really thought he was gonna lose. I don't want to be wrong this time, and if I am wrong, I don't want to get hit by Holyfield. Holyfield by kayo during the National Anthem."

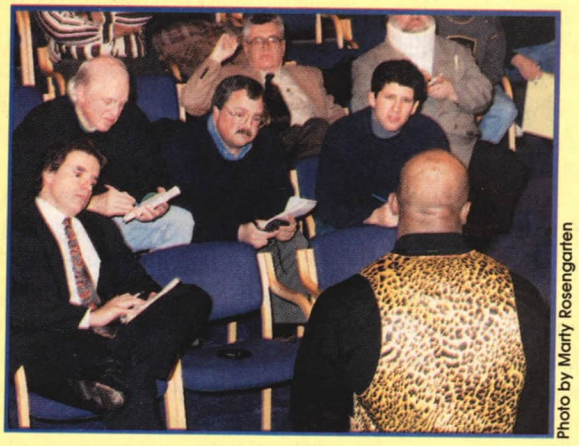


Photo by Marty Rosengarten

Holyfield meets the press, including (from left) Borges, Phillips, Logan, Schuyler, and Sports Illustrated's Evan Kanew.

you can't say he's truly great, because there's no consistency in there."

What, then, is the standard for greatness? Ali, Louis, and Marciano top nearly everyone's list, though some hold Marciano's lack of height against him. But as Benton said, "That Marciano was tough. He kept coming and coming. You couldn't stop him."

After those three, the champions who come next depend on whether you believe Gene Tunney and Jack Dempsey, who fought at about 185-192 pounds in the '20s, would have been big enough to hold their own with modern heavyweights. Jack Johnson and Jim Jeffries, greats from just after the turn of the century, merit consideration, but it's difficult to say how their skills would have compared to those of, say, Louis or Ali.

In rounding out their top five, Markson and Brenner prefer to rate only fighters they've witnessed in person. "Ezzard Charles was a magnificent all-round fighter," Markson said. "Larry Holmes was a very good fighter. He was underrated, but he belongs up there."

Brenner's top five include Louis, Ali, Joe Frazier, Marciano, and Sonny Liston. Although Liston won only two title fights (both against Floyd Patterson) before losing a pair to Ali, he is highly regarded by many for scoring 23 kayos in the 27 fights prior to his first defeat at the hands of "The Greatest."

"I was very impressed with his great fights on the way to the title," Steward said of Liston. "Patterson wouldn't fight him, so he destroyed the whole heavyweight division by knocking everybody out, forcing Patterson to fight him."

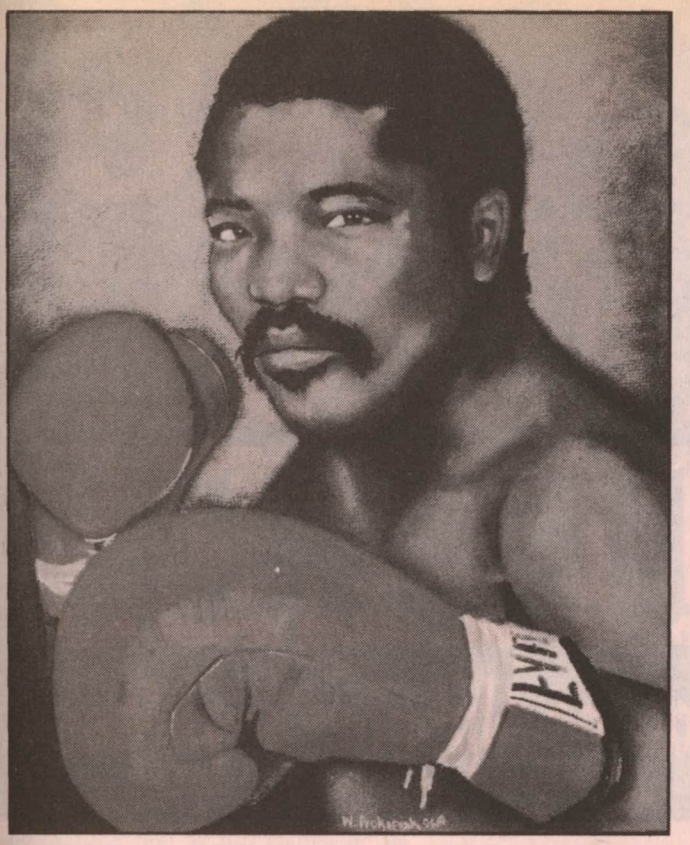
Liston is fourth in Steward's top five behind Ali, Louis, and Tunney, and ahead of Holmes. Like Brenner, Steward agrees Foreman in his prime would have beaten both Holyfield and Tyson.

Talk to enough boxing veterans and the names most often cited are Ali, Louis, Marciano, Liston, Holmes, and Charles. Then it gets hazy as to where to place Tunney, Dempsey, Johnson, and Jeffries among the old-timers, and Foreman, Frazier, Walcott, Holyfield, and Tyson among modern champions.

You can add names from the roll call of champions and argue forever. But the way

(Continued on page 57)

Legends of Boxing



Aaron Pryor

Card shown actual size. Biography and record printed on back.

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THE RING UNIFIES THE TITLES

Our Computer Does What The Alphabet Boys Won't

Second of two parts

By Jim Trunzo

There's a better chance of Don King getting a crewcut than there is of boxing unifying its titles. That being the case, THE RING has decided to enlist the aid of Jim Trunzo and the newest version of his computer boxing simulation, APBA Pro Boxing For Windows. The goal: to unravel boxing's Gordian knot.

Editor Steve Farhood presented Trunzo with two parings in each of 16 divisions. (Okay, we forgot the strawweights.) Each 12-round bout was fought 100 times in order to arrive at a bias-free consensus result. What follows are the fruits of this Herculean effort, and the reemergence of that rarest of creatures—the Undisputed Champion. One can only dream.

Last month we unified the titles at heavyweight, light heavyweight, middleweight, welterweight, lightweight, featherweight, bantamweight, and flyweight. This month: The remaining divisions.

CRUISERWEIGHTS

Semifinals:

Nate Miller vs. Fabrice Tiozzo

The powerpunching "Mr. Miller" starts with a bang by flooring Tiozzo 25 seconds into the first round. The Frenchman leaps to his feet and trades evenly for the remainder of the round. Tiozzo outhustles a lackluster Miller for the next three frames, but the Philadelphian's power surfaces again in the fifth, when he drops Tiozzo for a second time. Miller dominates the sixth and seventh, but stops punching in the eighth and ninth, allowing Tiozzo back into the fray. In the 10th, Miller batters a tiring Tiozzo. He registers his third knockdown in the 10th, then rains punches on the exhausted Tiozzo until the referee intervenes at the 2:48 mark. Miller by TKO in round 10.

Semifinals:

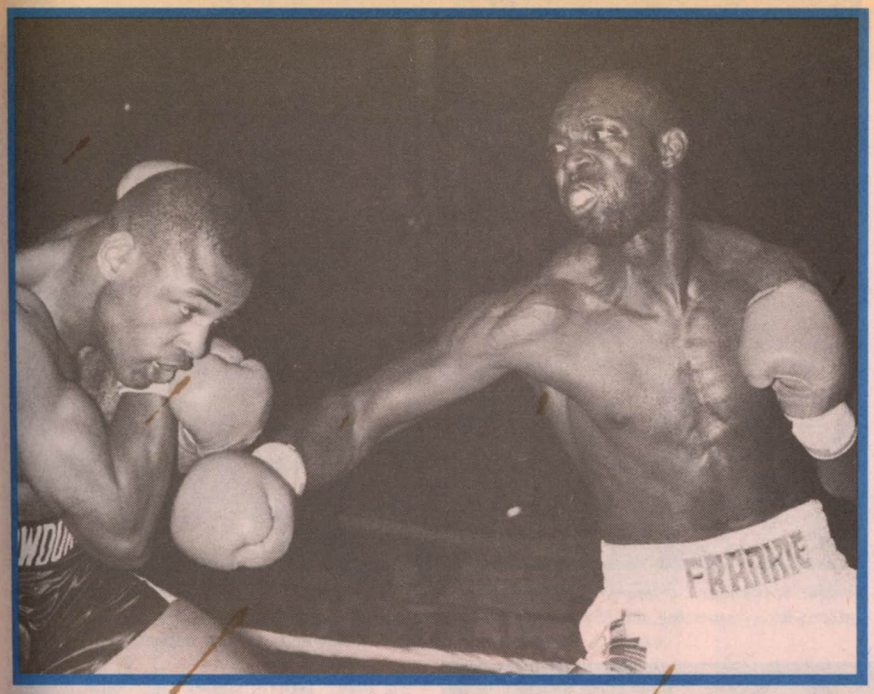
Marcelo Dominguez vs. Adolpho Washington

After three rounds of relative inactivity, Washington finally presses the action in the fourth, winning the first clear-cut round. The fight see-saws through the next five rounds. In the 10th, Dominguez opens a gash over Washington's right eye and dominates through the 11th. It's anybody's fight going into the 12th. Washington and Dominguez punch freely, with Washington landing the more telling blows. The scores: 115-114 Washington, 115-113 Dominguez, and 116-112 Dominguez. Dominguez by split decision.

Championship Match:

Marcelo Dominguez vs. Nate Miller

Miller starts quickly, looking to end the fight. Dominguez shows good defensive



Super middleweight Liles utilizes his southpaw jab against Robert Carson. The veteran's height, reach, and left-handed stance make him a particularly difficult opponent.

skills and avoids the power shots, scoring with jabs and combinations of his own. Dominguez dominates through the first two-thirds of the fight, outhustling and outpunching his foe. Miller rallies in the ninth, hurting the Argentine several times, then continues his comeback in the 10th and 11th. But Dominguez clearly takes the 12th when he rocks a charging Miller with a straight right. The scores: 115-113 Dominguez, 116-114 Dominguez, and 117-112 Dominguez. Dominguez by unanimous decision. **Undisputed Champion: Marcelo Dominguez.**

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS

Semifinals:

Frank Liles vs. Steve Collins

Utilizing his jab, Liles piles up points over the first third of the fight. Collins is spirited, but not as effective as his adversary. Liles opens a cut under Collins' left eye in round four; the Irishman's face is starting to get puffy. Collins surges in the fifth and sixth, using a body attack to set up headshots. Liles comes back in the seventh, with a right cross slicing Collins over the eye. Liles batters Collins in the eighth, reopening both cuts. The doctor takes a close look between rounds and refuses to allow Collins to continue. Liles by TKO in round eight.

Semifinals:

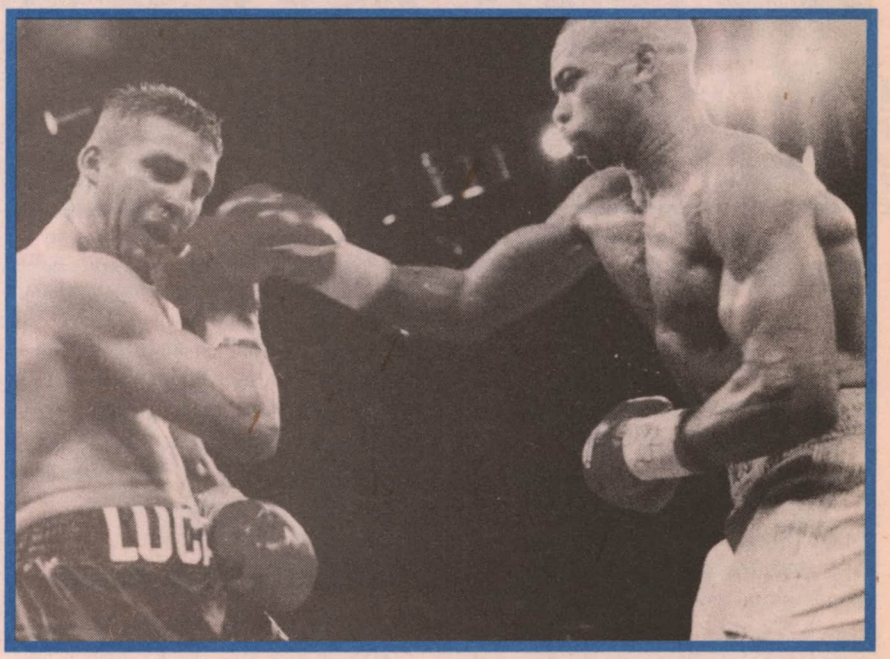
Roy Jones vs. Robin Reid

Reid comes out fighting in the only style he knows, but his willingness is his undoing. Jones' blistering flurries floor Reid for the first time at the 2:30 mark of the opening round. Ten seconds later, Reid crashes to the canvas again. A more cautious Englishman appears clear-eyed to begin the second. Jones forces exchanges throughout the round and dominates. A combination to open the third downs Reid. After another knockdown, the referee waves the bout over. Jones by kayo in round three.

Championship Match:

Frank Liles vs. Roy Jones

Liles and Jones exercise discretion in rounds one and two, as the champions measure one another. The fight is fairly even going into the fifth. Jones cuts loose with his best offensive display, but a blistering right from Liles does the unthinkable; Jones is down! Liles tries to make the best of this unexpected opportunity, but Jones frustrates him with purposeful movement. Jones dominates the sixth and seventh with a brilliant display of boxing. At the end of the eighth, he knocks down Liles, and in the ninth, the fighters go toe-to-toe, with Jones' incredible hand speed the difference. Liles lurches sideways into the ropes and drops. He struggles to his feet, but fails to beat the count. Jones by kayo in round nine. **Undisputed Champion: Roy Jones.**



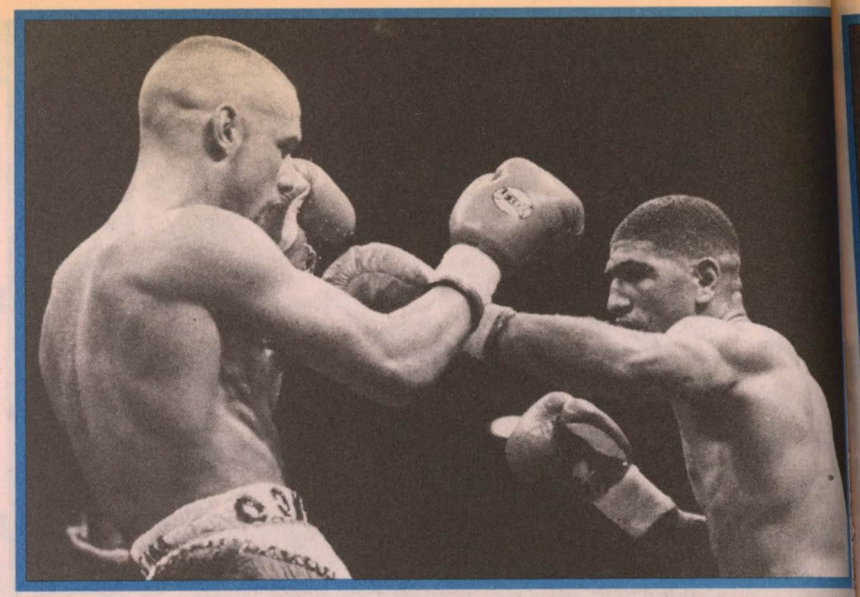
Jones peppers the sadly overmatched Eric Lucas. Can anyone in boxing match Jones' blend of speed and power? Moreover, his awkwardness makes him difficult to prepare for.

JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS

Semifinals:

Terry Norris vs. Carl Daniels

A tricky southpaw, Daniels frustrates Norris for three rounds. "Terrible Terry" makes adjustments in the fourth and starts to target his big right hand. In the fifth, Norris masterfully cuts off the ring; a combination explodes off Daniels' head and he sags to the canvas. The southpaw rises at seven and the bell sounds. Norris again hurts Daniels early in the sixth, this time with a bodyshot. Daniels goes down moments later from a hook and can't beat the count. Norris by kayo in round six.



Wright, a southpaw, seems to have turned orthodox in an effort to catch Bronco McKart. A clever boxer who is improving, the 154-pounder enjoyed a breakthrough year in '96.

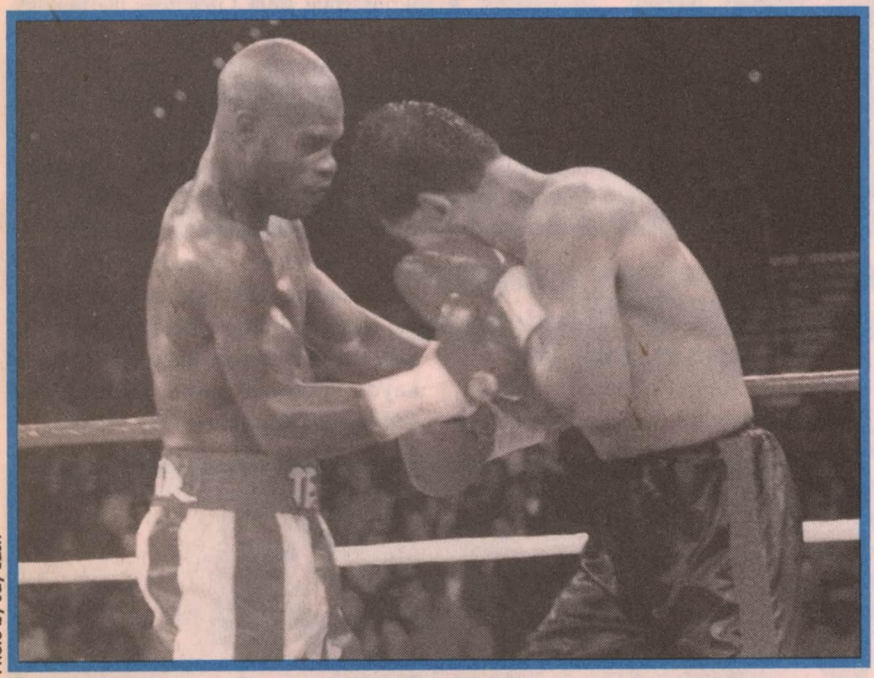


Photo by Jay Lash

Norris mixes inside with Alex Rios, who gave the champion a good scrap for five rounds last September. "Terrible Terry" is a fast and accurate puncher, but his willingness to brawl has occasionally gotten him into trouble. How might he fare with a slick boxer like Wright?

Semifinals:

Laurent Boudouani vs. Winky Wright

Boudouani comes out winging, but Wright, a southpaw, capitalizes on his superior hand speed and scores each time the Frenchman charges inside. After two rounds, Boudouani shifts gears and combines boxing skills with occasional aggressiveness; he competes evenly during the middle rounds. Wright's accuracy pays off in the seventh, when he lands more than 40 punches. As a result, Boudouani's left eye swells nearly shut. In the eighth, Wright twice knocks Boudouani to the canvas, and the fallen fighter's corner surrenders. Wright by kayo in round eight.

Championship Match:

Terry Norris vs. Winky Wright

Norris and Wright box their way through the second before opening up in the third. Norris stifles an assault by landing several hard shots. In the fourth, Norris appears to hurt Wright and wades in, only to be dropped by a winging right that clips him on the chin. Wright presses his advantage and puts Norris on the canvas again. Norris moves and clinches through the next two rounds. In the seventh, Norris regains his faculties and blitzes a winded Wright. The eighth is also all Norris. He continues his comeback in the ninth, dropping Wright for an eight-count. Norris accelerates in the 10th, and Wright has nothing left to counter the bombs. A humane referee saves a still-standing Wright from further punishment, intervening at the 2:10 mark. Norris by TKO in round nine. **Undisputed Champion: Terry Norris.**

JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS

Semifinals:

Julio Cesar Chavez vs. Kostya Tszyu

Chavez follows Tszyu around the ring while consistently beaten to the punch. The Mexican's face is puffy by the second frame. In the third, Tszyu trades with Chavez and both fighters emerge marked; Chavez bleeds from a bad cut on the corner of his left eye, and Tszyu's left eye

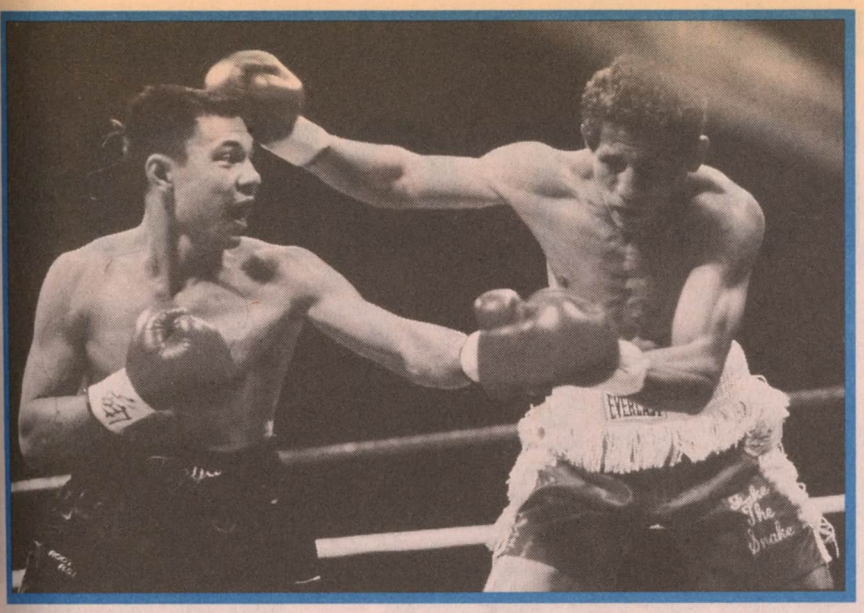


Photo by Monica Evening News

Tszyu overpowers Jake Rodriguez during his title-winning performance in January 1995. The Australia-based Russian is heading toward a shootout with Oscar De La Hoya.

shows significant swelling. Chavez swallows punches as Tszyu returns to boxing mode in the fourth. Then, after softening his foe, the young Russian knocks him down with a blistering right cross. Chavez regains his feet but has nothing left to offer. Tszyu again puts him on his back, and Chavez makes it only to one knee by the count of 10. Tszyu by knockout in round four.

Semifinals:

Oscar De La Hoya vs. Khalid Rahilou

Rahilou runs like a thief for the first three rounds. When De La Hoya moves close enough to land, he shakes the Frenchman. In the fourth, "The Golden Boy" corners Rahilou, who bravely but foolishly fires back. De La Hoya shrugs off his opponent's punches and strikes with a big left hook. A five-punch combination then drops Rahilou for a count of eight. Rahilou survives the round, but is bulldozed in the fifth. He's dropped by a right hand, and this time he doesn't get up. De La Hoya by kayo in round five.

Championship Match:

Kostya Tszyu vs. Oscar De La Hoya

For the first five rounds, both fighters opt to box rather than slug. While both land their share of blows, De La Hoya's punches appear to inflict more damage. By the sixth, Tszyu's left eye is a mess. Showing no caution, the Russian takes De La Hoya to the brink of defeat, pounding him into the ropes, but failing to put him down. De La Hoya rebounds in the seventh, turning Tszyu's cut into an ugly gash. Half-blinded, Tszyu runs into a crushing right cross and goes down. He rises at seven, but one look at his eyes prompts the referee to call a halt. De La Hoya by TKO in round seven. **Undisputed Champion: Oscar De La Hoya.**

JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS

Semifinals:

Yong Soo Choi vs. Arturo Gatti

It's a war from round one as Gatti charges out to meet Choi. The South Korean chooses to stand and trade—and promptly goes down in the first minute. Choi rises and gamely fights back. Gatti emerges from a clinch with a cut over his left eye. With seconds left in the first, Gatti drops Choi again. Choi comes out boxing in the second, but can't keep a still-bleeding Gatti off him. A hook to the body causes Choi to sag against the ropes, and the referee grabs Gatti, halting the fight. Gatti by TKO in round two.

Semifinals:

Azumah Nelson vs. Tracy Patterson

Nelson shocks Patterson early in round one, driving him to the canvas with a sneaky right. Patterson isn't hurt, but boxes cautiously for the remainder of the round. Patterson attacks Nelson's body and head during the next seven rounds, while "The Professor" loads up on every punch. By the eighth, Nelson looks his age and Patterson steps up the attack. The proud

(Continued on page 58)

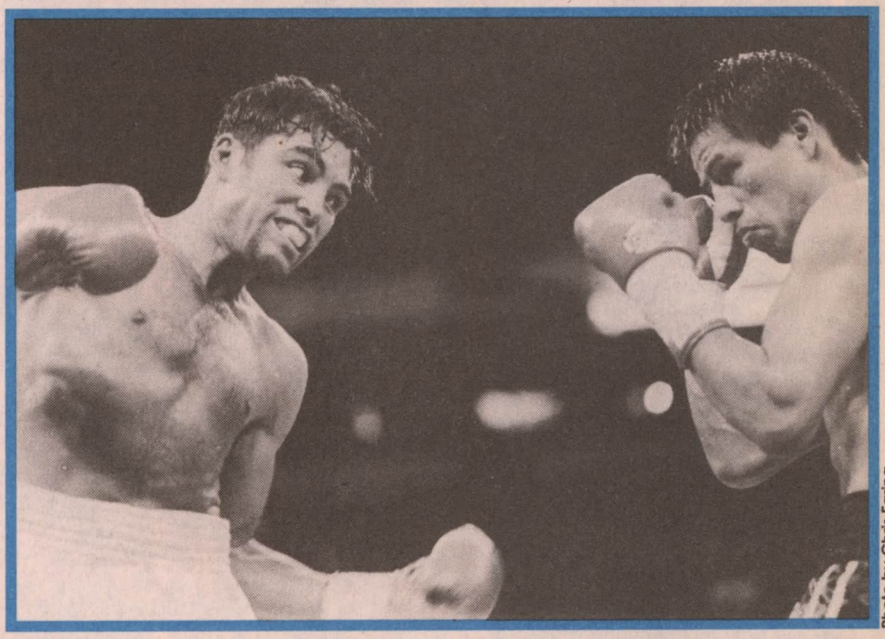
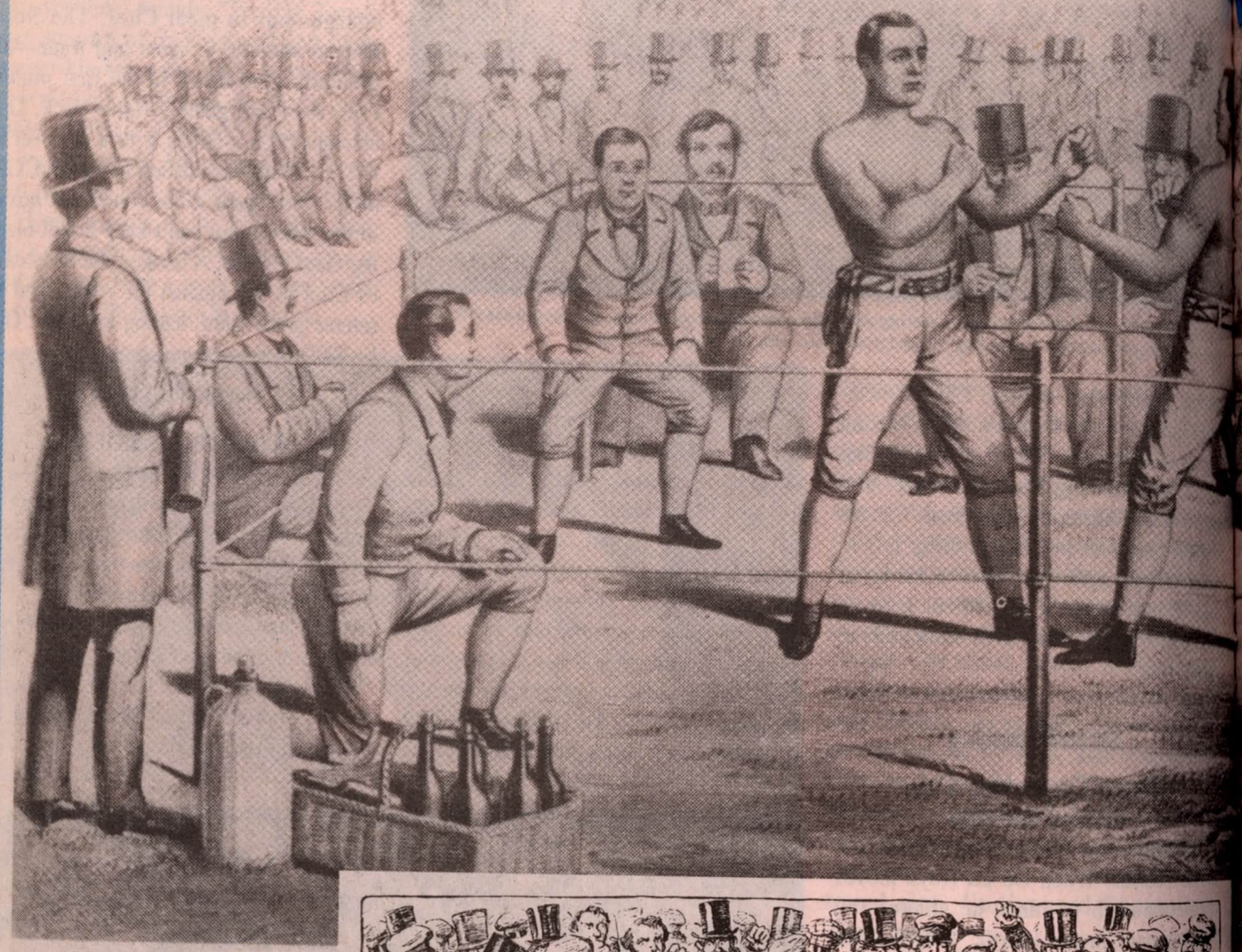


Photo by Chris Farina

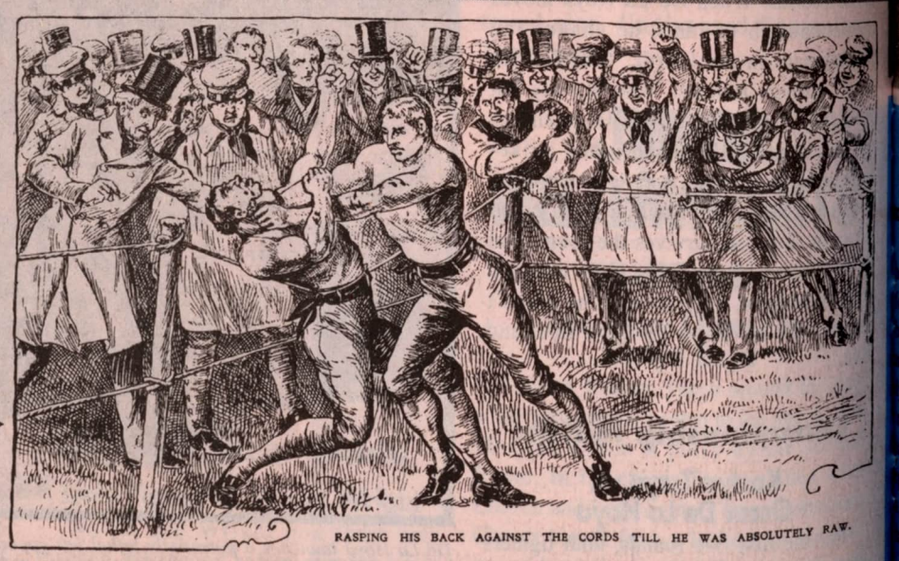
De La Hoya launches a potentially lethal left uppercut during his points win over Miguel Angel Gonzalez. As "The Golden Boy" rises in weight, will he carry his kayo power with him?

LOW, DISGUSTING, AND IMMORAL

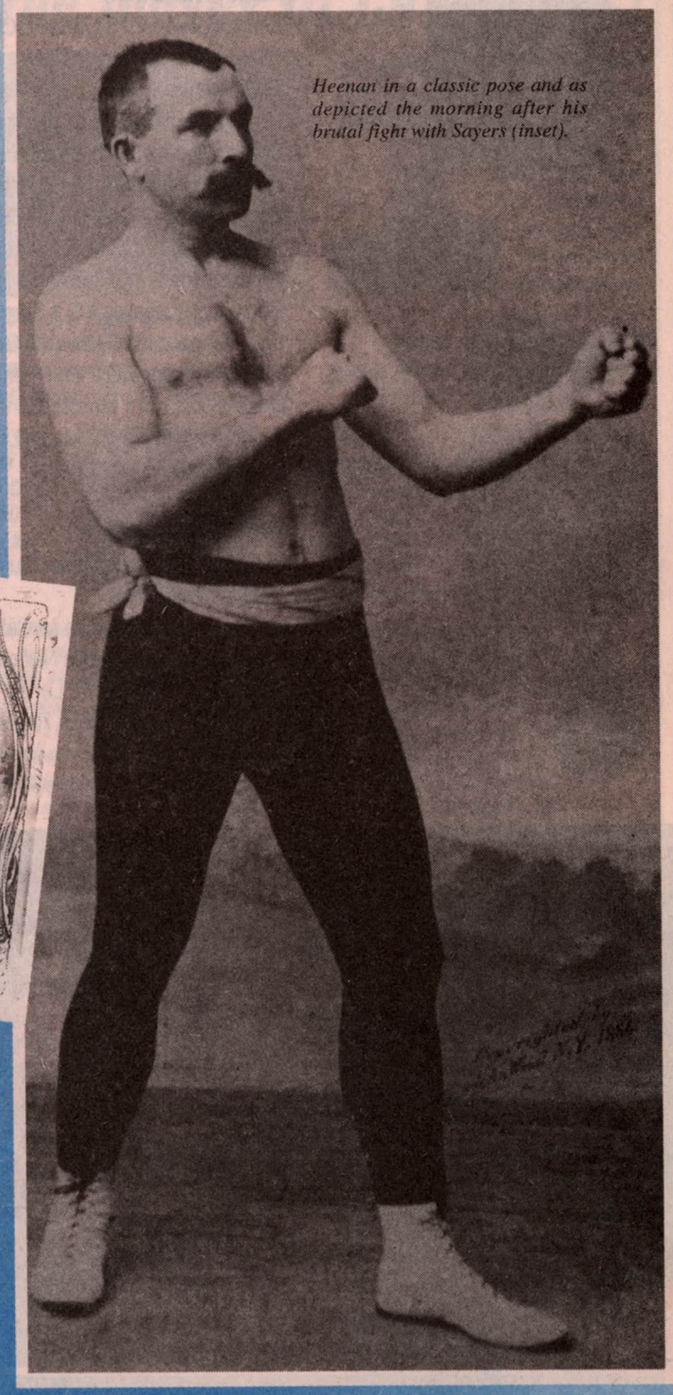
THE FIGHT OF THE (19th) CENTURY



This is a Currier and Ives print of what was described as "the most famous international battle ever staged," the bare-knuckle brawl pitting England's Tom Sayers and America's John C. Heenan at Hampshire, England, in 1860.



A frightening moment toward the end of the historical contest: Heenan almost chokes Sayers to death. The Marquis of Queensberry rules would not be formulated for another seven years.



Heenan in a classic pose and as depicted the morning after his brutal fight with Sayers (inset).

...on Craig

...e train that pulled out of London Bridge Station at ...our o'clock on the morning of April 17, 1860, had ...een hired specially for the occasion. It was very ...rrying around a thousand passengers, all well-to-do. ...y enough, they had no idea where they were going. ...ason for this was simple: The time and venue of the ...t they were to attend had to be kept secret because it ...al. They were on their way to the last bare-knuckle ... England. American John C. Heenan, the "Benicia ... had crossed the Atlantic to challenge English champi-

(Continued on page 60)

SUMMARY

HEAVYWEIGHTS
Lennox Lewis KO 5 Oliver McCall
(Regains Vacant WBC Title)
Zeljko Mavrovic KO 8 Julius Francis
Buster Douglas W 10 Dickie Ryan
Corrie Sanders KO 1 Arthur Weathers
Jeremy Williams KO 1 Phil Jackson
Oleg Maskaev KO 2 Rodney Blount
Levi Billups D 10 Everton Davis
Jeff Wooden W 10 Frankie Swindell
Courage Tshabalala KO 1 Stanley Hughey
Louis Monaco KO 5 Kevin McBride
Shannon Briggs KO 2 Eric French
Lionel Butler KO 1 Marcos Gonzalez
Alonzo Highsmith W 6 Martin Lopez
Butterbean W 4 Nick Phillips

CRUISERWEIGHTS
Nate Miller KO 2 Alexander Gurov
(Retains WBA Title)
James Toney W 12 Mike McCallum
Torsten May W 10 Jason Nicholson
Don Diego Poeder W 12 Lenzie Morgan
Arthur Williams KO 7 Rick Roufus
Dale Brown KO 5 Marcello Arvena
Andre Purlett KO 1 Ken McCurdy

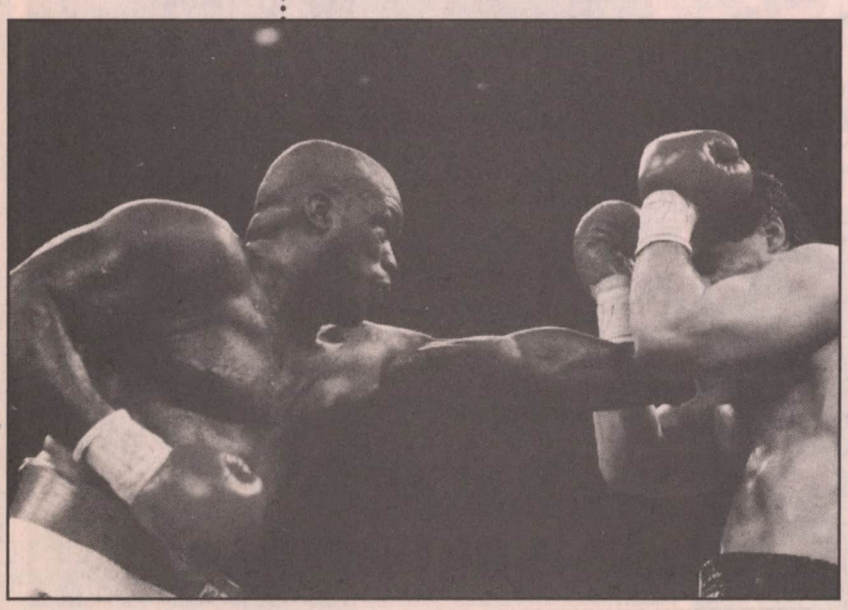


Photo by Marty Rosengarten

Buster Douglas busts up Dickie Ryan

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS
Thomas Hearns KO 5 Ed Dalton
Richard Frazier W 10 Darryl Johnson
Antonio Tarver KO 2 Joaquin Garcia

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Robin Reid KO 7 Giovanni Pretorius
(Retains WBC Title)
Steve Collins KO 5 Frederic Seillier
Charles Brewer W 12 Greg Wright
Darrin Allen KO 6 Mark Buchanan
Earl Butler W 12 Clarence White

MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Jorge Castro W 10 Roberto Duran
Glen Johnson W 10 Sam Garr
Shawn O'Sullivan KO 6 Tim Payton

JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Bronco McKart KO 3 Richard Evans
Adrian Dodson W Disq. 5 Rachid Serdjane
Greg Haugen W 10 Jesus Mayorga

WELTERWEIGHTS
Patrick Charpentier Tech. Draw 4
Bobby Heath
Vernon Forrest KO 1 Mike Rios
Michael Loewe W 12 Santiago Samaniego
Sammy Fuentes W 10 Ruben Valdes
Mark Lewis KO 5 Joel Garcia
Bill Costello KO 3 Marvin Ladson
Lonnie Smith W 10 Dennis Allen
Juan Soberanes W 12 Jose Rodrigues

JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS
Rafael Ruelas KO 2 Jesus Arce
Hector Lopez W 10 Israel Cardona
Michael Clark W 10 Ramon Sanchez
Alfonso Sanchez KO 2 Mark Fernandez

LIGHTWEIGHTS
Shane Mosley KO 4 Elias Quiroz
George Scott W 12 Zoltan Kalocsai
Artur Grigorjan KO 11 Raul Balbi
Gabe Ruelas W 10 James Crayton
Fred Norwood W 10 Roberto Avila
Cesar Bazan KO 1 Tata Abastas
Saul Duran W 10 Francis Velazquez
Joel Perez KO 5 Raymundo Flores
Floyd Mayweather Jr. KO 2 Edgar Ayala

JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS
Arturo Gatti W 12 Tracy Patterson
(Retains IBF Title)
Yong Soo Choi W 12 Lakva Sim
(Retains WBA Title)
Angel Manfredy W 12 Wilson Rodriguez
Anatoly Alexandrov W 8 Joseph Figueroa
John Brown KO 2 Sergio Pena

FEATHERWEIGHTS
Naseem Hamed KO 8 Tom Johnson
(Wins IBF Title)
Juan Manuel Marquez KO 10 Cedric Mingo
Cesar Soto KO 1 Barrington Francis
Billy Hardy W 12 Steve Robinson
Willie Jorrin KO 7 George Parra

JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHTS
Enrique Sanchez W 8 Felix Perez
Rafael Del Valle KO 5 Javier Torres
Nestor Garza KO 8 Juan Chavez

BANTAMWEIGHTS
Sirimongkol Singmanasuk W 12
Jesus Sarabia
(Retains WBC Title)
Veeraphol Sahaprom KO 3 JoJo Torres
Victor Rabanales W 10 Marius Frias
Johnny Armour W 12 Petrica Paraschiv

JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHTS
Gerry Penalosa W 12 Hiroshi Kawashima
(Wins WBC Title)
Jose Lopez KO 4 Martin Solario

FLYWEIGHTS
Jose Bonilla KO 7 Hiroki Ioka
(Retains WBA Title)
Mark Johnson W 12 Alejandro Montiel
(Retains IBF Title)
Adi Lewis W 12 Keith Knox
Eric Morel KO 1 David Chamendes

JUNIOR FLYWEIGHTS
Melchor Cob Castro W 12 Juan Bautista
Baby Jake Matlala W 12 Mickey Cantwell
Edgar Cardenas W 10 Nene Sanchez

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RINGSIDE REPORTS

FIGHTER of the MONTH

Maybe it isn't fair, but when Americans hear British fans touting an up-and-comer from the other side of the pond, we tend to dismiss the fighter as overhyped, underskilled, and a total waste of our time. Snobby? Perhaps. But the sight of too many horizontal British heavyweights will do that to you.

Photo by Tom Casino/Showtime

Naseem Hamed isn't a heavyweight, and the Americans who continue to dismiss him aren't very bright. In February, it was longtime 126-pound champion Tom Johnson who was left horizontal, and for those who still needed convincing, Hamed erased any and all doubts of his legitimacy.

Hamed is full of flash *and* substance, and he's also now a pound-for-pound candidate and the number-one featherweight in the world. One other thing: The Prince who would be King is only 23. Get used to him because he's gonna be in your face for a long time.

• • • •

Naseem Hamed

Mauricio Pastrana W 12 Michael Carbajal

Las Vegas, Nevada: Plans to match Carbajal with Ricardo Lopez were rudely shelved when, in the third defense of his second reign as IBF junior flyweight champion, "Little Hands Of Stone" lost a split decision to mandatory challenger and 10-1 underdog Pastrana on the De La Hoya-Gonzalez undercard at the Thomas and Mack Center.

The 23-year-old Pastrana, 106½, Colombia, boxed carefully for two rounds before almost dropping Carbajal, 108, Phoenix, Arizona, with a chopping counter right with 30 seconds remaining in the third. Though his followup attack was rather mild, by the end of the round Pastrana was backing up the champion.

There were no more threats of knockdowns as the intense adversaries settled in for trench warfare. Carbajal, 29, used his height and reach against the ever-lunging Pastrana, who at 5'2" needed to stay close. Firing effectively to the body, Carbajal, 44-3 (29), got back into the war in a hurry. He also landed his jab, but Pastrana, 16-0 (13), answered with rights to the head.

The bout see-sawed in the later rounds. Applying steady pressure, Carbajal took the 11th and 12th, but it wasn't enough, with Jerry Roth and Duane Ford scoring for Pastrana by 115-113 and 115-114, respectively. Mike Glienna favored Carbajal by 116-112. All three judges are from the USA. THE RING favored Pastrana by 115-113.

"My punches just didn't flow well, and that's when I started trying to knock Pastrana out with every punch," said Carbajal. "I'm not going to say anything about him, because he's a good fighter. I'd like to get a rematch, even if I have to go to Colombia to fight him."

Going in, Pastrana was unknown outside of Colombia. How much did he respect Carbajal? So much so that he named his two sons Michael and Danny, after the two-time champion and his manager-trainer, brother Danny.

Carbajal earned $125,000 and Pastrana $52,500. The Colombian's previous career-high purse had been $1,000.

Promoter: Top Rank

(1-18-97)

Jack Welsh

Kostya Tszyu Tech. Draw 1 Leonardo Mas

Las Vegas, Nevada: Hopeful of someday challenging Oscar De La Hoya, IBF junior welterweight champion Tszyu returned to the USA on the undercard of "The Golden Boy's" victory over Miguel Angel Gonzalez at the Thomas and Mack Center.

Making his fifth defense, Tszyu, 139, Sydney, Australia, via Russia, was seemingly en route to a kayo win when forced to settle for a bizarre technical draw vs. Mas, 139, Miami via Dorado, Puerto Rico.

The 24-year-old Mas answered the opening bell with a stick-and-move strategy, but 40 seconds in, Tszyu, 27, dropped him with a lead hook. The champion clearly wanted to end matters quickly, but Mas stalled him by repeatedly clinching.

With 20 seconds remaining in the round, Tszyu, 18-0-1 (14), struck again, downing Mas, 23-2-1 (15), with a hook on the break. Mas rose at American referee Joe Cortez' count of seven, then, a split-second before the bell, crashed again from a compact cross-hook combination. Again, Tszyu scored just as Cortez was stepping in to intervene. Half-sitting on the canvas, Mas held his glove to his eye, making it clear he wasn't going to continue—whatever the circumstances.

Photo by Jed Jacobsohn/Allsport

Tszyu was cheated out of a kayo win

The judges were Chuck Giampa (USA), Bill Graham (USA), and Ray Wheatley (Australia).

Cortez ruled the third knockdown was the result of an unintentional illegal blow—Tszyu later said he didn't hear the referee's command to break—and ruled a no-contest. Vlad Warton, Tszyu's manager, protested in an attempt to get the outcome changed from a draw to a no-decision.

It was initially thought that Mas had suffered a fractured jaw, but as it turned out, he didn't even go to the hospital for X-rays.

When asked whether he thought Mas had been acting, Tszyu said, "No acting. He was hurt because I got him with a great left. I believe I am a very clean fighter. If it was a close fight, I would agree to a draw, but I won very clearly. I've done nothing wrong, and everybody agreed with me except the referee."

Tszyu is soon expected back in the States for a defense against either Vince Phillips or Charles Murray.

Tszyu earned $50,000 and Mas $25,000.

Promoters: Top Rank and Caesars Palace

(1-18-97)

Jack Welsh

Rosendo Alvarez KO 11 Songkram Porpaoin

Sakaew, Thailand: Unbeaten Nicaraguan Alvarez kept the WBA minimumweight (strawweight) title for the fourth time, battering a tired and helpless Porpaoin into a TKO defeat at 2:14 of the 11th round.

Alvarez won the title by outpointing Chana Porpaoin in December 1995. Songkram Porpaoin is Chana's twin brother.

The 26-year-old Alvarez started quickly, flooring Thailand's Porpaoin, 30, with a right-left in round two. From that point on, the champion proved more skillful and accurate, outfighting the challenger in close quarters. Porpaoin elected to fire big punches, but most were averted by Alvarez.

In the seventh, Alvarez, 24-0 (16), again downed Porpaoin with a well-timed counter right. In that same stanza, referee Mitch Halpern (USA) penalized Porpaoin for punching low.

Porpaoin, 16-1 (8), attempted to stage a dramatic comeback in

the ninth, when, seemingly trapped in a corner, he dropped the champion with a counter right. Upon picking himself up, Alvarez responded furiously, battering Porpaoin and bringing swelling around both of the Thai's eyes. In the 11th, with Alvarez pounding away and Porpaoin reeling on the ropes, Halpern stepped in.

Said promoter Niwat Laosuwanwat, "Alvarez has improved a lot, and he showed he was too good for our boy."

At this point, Alvarez would be a good match for dominant WBC strawweight champion Ricardo Lopez.

(1-11-97)

Joe Koizumi

Mark Johnson W 12 Alejandro Montiel

Inglewood, California: Making his second defense, IBF flyweight champion Johnson, who had kayoed his previous 12 opponents, apologized for letting this one get to the cards. It was unnecessary.

"Too Sharp" still looked like the best flyweight in the world. But he happened to face a guy with an iron chin who fought like a graduate of Andrew Golota's Advanced Seminar on the Art of the Low Blow. Montiel, 112, Los Mochis, Mexico, went south of the border often, and as a result, Johnson, 112, Washington, D.C., was left grimacing as often as Riddick Bowe.

Referee Robert Byrd (USA) took points from the 25-year-old Montiel in the fourth and eighth rounds and cautioned him enough times to grow hoarse. But the challenger, who evidently decided he couldn't win clean, would invariably revert to his attack on Johnson's jewels, punctuated from time to time by a vicious elbow somewhere else. One such elbow, disguised as a right-handed punch in round nine, missed Johnson's chin by a whisker and drew a loud protest. Byrd, however, missed it.

Once again, Johnson, 25, had to contend with both his opponent and the Great Western Forum crowd, which figured Los Mochis is a lot closer to Southern California than D.C.

Johnson, 31-1 (23), came out tentatively and gradually put on more and more pressure, throwing stiff jabs and mixing a body attack with well-placed headshots, particularly uppercuts with both hands. Using clever footwork and boxing intelligently, the 5'3" southpaw negated Montiel's four-inch height advantage. Whenever Montiel, 33-3 (22), initiated a toe-to-toe exchange, such as in rounds four, five, and six, Johnson stood tough.

When he threw legal punches, the challenger actually looked pretty good. He just wasn't as good as the champ, who won almost every round en route to securing a unanimous decision. In the 12th, Johnson cruised to the finish by dropping his hands and hot-dogging. Montiel tried, but he couldn't hit him. In a sense, it was a payback for the Mexican's flagrant fouls.

Gwen Adair and Marty Sammon both scored 118-108 and Pat Russell 119-107. All three judges are from the USA.

"Montiel's a terrific fighter," said Johnson, "but he don't know the rules."

(2-10-97)

Ivan G. Goldman

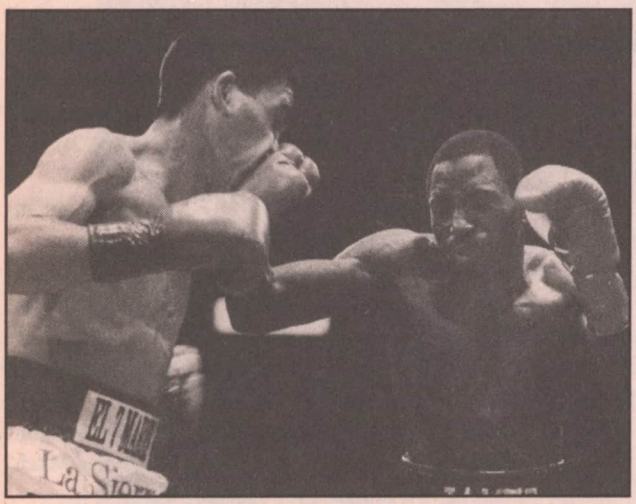


Photo by Brent Cook

Johnson tested Montiel's chin often

Robin Reid KO 7 Giovanni Pretorius

London, England: After dominating his opponent and almost halting him in the first round, WBC super middleweight champion Reid steadfastly wore down Pretorius, stopping him with a clinical right hand at 2:10 of the seventh round. The bout, the chief support to Naseem Hamed-Tom Johnson at the London Arena, was Reid's first defense.

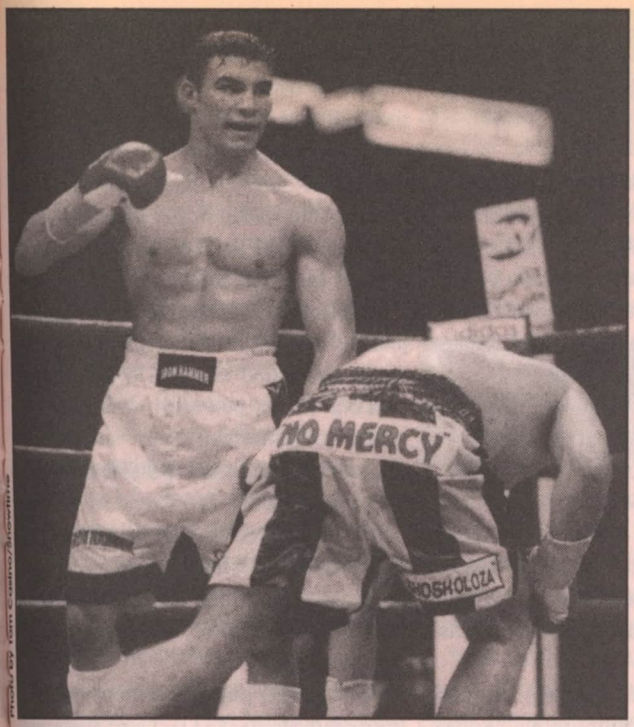
Power proved the difference as the 25-year-old Reid, 166½, Manchester, England, dominated exchanges and ripped the challenger apart. But it was not all straightforward. The courageous Pretorius, 166, Johannesburg, South Africa, who had campaigned mostly as a junior middleweight, drilled home enough punches of his own to place Reid's modeling career on hold. The self-styled "Grim Reaper," a bronze medalist at the 1992 Olympics, finished with a huge swelling around his right eye and a marked left ear. But he proved emphatically the master of the fight.

Reid showed little regard for his unbeaten opponent's record as he came straight off his stool at the first bell and threw everything at the 25-year-old challenger. Lefts and rights rained in on the beleaguered Pretorius, who must have felt like returning to his corner for body armor. The South African stubbornly refused to go down, but was badly shaken by a hook that was followed by a right and another hook. Reid, 23-0-1 (18), kept banging, and the relentless pressure finally told as the challenger dropped to one knee. Referee Lou Filippo (USA) might have stopped it, so one-sided had the action been, but he allowed Pretorius to continue. The third man's decision was validated when Pretorius, 22-1-1 (19), retaliated with a sharp uppercut before the round's completion.

Reid had taken the stanza overwhelmingly, but in the second he showed signs that punching non-stop for three minutes had taken a toll. Pretorius took heart from the champion's reduced state and fired home a few punches that bloodied the champion's nose. Reid rebounded off the ropes with a solid right that again shook the challenger badly. He avoided the sustained trouble he had experienced in the first, but was becoming heavily marked around the face.

A series of uppercuts stunned Pretorius in the third, but he rallied strongly in the fourth, landing some stinging shots that added to Reid's growing discomfort. Reid came back strongly in the fifth, clubbing his opponent to the canvas for the second time. He flailed away until the bell, and as Pretorius marched back to the corner, blood spilled from cuts above both eyes.

Photo by Tom Cosine/Showtime



Reid indeed showed Pretorius no mercy

The challenger coped well in round six, but was shaken by a left in the seventh. Pluckily, Pretorius came forward again, but as he wound up on a right, he got nailed by a dynamite right that sent him sprawling to the deck. Filippo waved it off after a partial count.

The judges were John Keane (England), Gelasio Perez (Mexico), and Phakamile Jacobs (South Africa).

"I felt I had something to prove," said Reid. "I went to Italy and fought in a fighter's backyard for a world title. (Reid took the title from Vincenzo Nardiello last October.) They thought I had been knocked out, and I proved them wrong. Tonight my extra strength told, and I proved I could be both a boxer and a puncher."

The bout was televised by Showtime.

Promoters: Frank Warren and Don King

(2-8-97)

Brian Doogan

Lennox Lewis KO 5 Oliver McCall

Las Vegas, Nevada: Lewis was keenly focused to reclaim the vacant WBC heavyweight title, but he could never have imagined that victory would come in such a bizarre manner. With a seemingly traumatized McCall refusing to fight, referee Mills Lane (USA) was forced to call a halt and declare Lewis a TKO winner at the 55-second mark of the fifth round before an irritable crowd of 4,800 at the Las Vegas Hilton Center. It was arguably the most freakish finish in heavyweight lore.

The 30-year-old McCall, who had won the WBC title by shocking Lewis with a second-round kayo in September 1994, quit punching after the third round and wouldn't return to his corner after the third and fourth stanzas, instead walking along the ropes like it was an afternoon in the park. But the pained expression on his face hardly suggested a leisurely stroll.

Looking very much like a man suffering an emotional breakdown in public, McCall, 237, Chicago, Illinois, repeatedly walked away from Lewis, 251, East London, England, in the fourth and fifth, his hands down as if inviting his opponent to knock him out. When Lewis would land a punch or two, McCall would either clinch or again walk away.

Whether McCall belonged in the ring is debatable. He had spent part of his training camp in drug and alcohol rehab, and in '96, he had run-ins with the police.

Midway through round four, Lewis, 31, landed two rights to the head and Lane halted the action, asking McCall, "Do you want to fight?" With urgency in his voice, McCall said, "I want to fight. I got to fight."

But when the referee waved the fighters together, McCall again dropped his gloves and walked away from Lewis. After the round, McCall was openly crying. Still, he answered the bell for round five. After Lewis drove him into a corner with a flurry, Lane wisely called a halt amid a thunderous cascade of catcalls.

The judges were Larry O'Connell (England), Dalby Shirley (USA), and Anek Hongtongkam (Thailand).

In what seemed like only a matter of minutes, Marc Ratner, the executive director of the Nevada State Athletic Commission, announced McCall's letter of credit for his $3,075,000 purse was being held pending an investigative hearing within 30 days. (Lewis earned more than $2-million.)

"Oliver McCall will not be paid," explained Ratner, "but he will have his day in court for not competing tonight. To my knowledge, we have never had a hearing like this, and I have never seen a man act like that." As we went to press, the hearing had not yet been conducted.

"McCall was running around and not defending himself," said referee Lane. "It was amazing. He was trying for two rounds and then something happened. I think he was having some sort of emotional breakdown. I thought at first he was playing possum."

Lewis, 30-1 (25), looked like he was going to be able to beat McCall, 28-7 (20), with his jab alone. He won the first two rounds, neither of which offered a hint of what was to come.

Said Lewis' trainer, Emanuel Steward, "After two rounds, when Lennox made him feel his strength, McCall was completely rattled. He wanted to get inside, but he didn't know how to do it. He wanted to defuse his emotion."

After the bout, McCall refused to meet the press. But one day later, he said his behavior in the ring had been part of a plan, sort of like Ali's rope-a-dope. It was hard to buy.

Perhaps the most logical explanation for what happened to McCall came from Dr. Marc Shatz, a Beverly Hills psychiatrist who was quoted in the *Los Angeles Times:* "McCall had a nervous breakdown, but it was not drug-related. He needs a long-term treatment program. It could be difficult for this man to get the help he needs from his denial in the press conference. He shouldn't make an application to fight for at least a year. But he could train if it's therapeutic for him."

The bout was televised by HBO.

Promoters: Main Events and Panix Promotions

(2-7-97)

Jack Welsh ■

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Hamed-Johnson

(Continued from page 37)

In his bouts against the unbeaten but unknown Alicea and soft-punching Mexican Medina, Hamed had begun to resemble the classroom genius who no longer considers it worth his while to crack the books. Complacency had contributed greatly to a sloppy showing against Alicea. After being dropped two minutes into the first round, Hamed salvaged his reputation by dismantling his opponent with concussive blows in the second. A heavy cold perhaps weakened him against Medina, but hardly excused the kind of lousy timing that might not have been out of place during an offensive play of the New York Jets or Giants.

Consequently, it was a slightly cautious Hamed who sized up Johnson with some speculative jabs in the opening round before a heavy right rocked the 32-year-old IBF champion. Struggling to find his range, Johnson fell short with most of his tentative attempts at retaliation, as Hamed stayed elusive and treated his opponent almost with contempt. Johnson pushed Hamed in the back after being gripped in a headlock and manuevered into a neutral corner.

Johnson, 125½, Detroit, Michigan, began round two trying to draw Hamed in to throw counterpunches. But Hamed's blows were sharp, and he constantly switched stances, further confusing the champion. Some slick jabs connected with Johnson's face, and when another left and a right hit their targets, Hamed had racked up the second round as well.

Hamed's mother had predicted a third-round victory for her son, and he started to breach Johnson's tight defense before a furious exchange erupted that Hamed clearly got the better of. But right at the bell, with Hamed's hands by his waist and his chin in the air, he was reduced to one knee by a fast overhand right. It should have been ruled a knockdown, but American referee Rudy Battle instead sent both men back to their corners.

The same could not have been said of Johnson in the next round, when a big right collided with his jaw. He survived, but was struggling now to deal with the awesome power of his foe. Hamed, 126, Sheffield, England, swept the fourth round, too, but walked into a devastating right in the fifth that caused his knees to dip and more than 10,000 hearts to skip a beat. Hamed took the shot well and was straight back at him, but it was Johnson's round and he claimed the next as well, as he at last had gained a foothold.

Johnson now seemed to be fancying the job. But as his confidence grew, so did the dangers. Hamed exacted full advantage, striking with a powerful right that staggered the American again and left him floundering along the ropes. He did well to stay upright until the sound of the bell, which interrupted Hamed in full flow and probably saved Johnson from a trip to the floor. Two hard lefts had driven Johnson into the corner, and this looked like the turning point.

The sharper punches were coming now from Hamed, 25-0 (23), as he followed a hard one-two with a crippling left. Johnson, 44-3-2 (26), took it but got nailed again by a strong right lead. The punch had a delayed reaction, and when Hamed sensed that Johnson was in deeper trouble than at first it seemed, he moved in to deliver the *coup de grace*. It was a savage right uppercut, which seemed to originate from Hamed's knees, that finally put Johnson away. It landed flush in the center of Johnson's face, and when he hit the canvas his legs were stiff. To Johnson's credit, he managed to climb back to his feet, but the referee wisely chose to wave off the fight at the 2:27 mark of the eighth round.

All three judges had Hamed ahead after seven rounds. Al DeVito (USA) had it 69-63, Victor Salomon (Mexico) 69-65, and Michael Ortega (USA) 69-64.

"Hamed has grown immeasurably since his last fight," observed Larkin. "He came out for the first round with his hands up and got down quickly to the business of boxing. I think his reign has only just begun."

Johnson was more circumspect. "I think he's a good champion," he said, "but he would have to win a rematch for me to be sure." Or perhaps another million would convince him.

Ingle had already made up his mind. "We should cherish a talent like his," he said of his fighter. "It might be 50, 100 years before we see someone as good in a

British ring again."

Two days after the fight, Ingle announced that from now on only a select few will be able to see Hamed in preparation. "People are coming along and pinching our ideas," he explained. "They are coming from all over the place. We have got a system that is very unorthodox. We had two fighters who came over from Japan and just turned up, and they stayed for a couple of days. The phone is ringing from all over the place. I've had to put a sign up, 'No Admission Without Appointment.' We even had people come from Albania and Romania."

The central figure in the play, a 23-year-old who is childlike in his self-absorption, would remain indifferent if the visitors were from Mars. After paying his respect to Johnson as a fighter, he turned his attention to his future plan.

"I am the most unique fighter in the world," Hamed said. "Tom Johnson was a great champion, but I will be a legend. I can do it all, switch from orthodox to southpaw, knock a guy out with either hand, attack from angles, stand square-on. I have the power. I've been hit on the jaw and I've taken it. I am the pure, ultimate champion. I want to unify the feather-weight title and then win world titles in five more weight divisions. People say I can't climb the divisions, that I'm too small. Height doesn't come into it when you've got a gift."

Put another way, you don't need to be the size of Goliath when you've got some pebbles and a sling—or two explosive fists and the favor of Allah. ■

Brian Doogan is The Ring's correspondent for Europe.

Holyfield-Tyson II

(Continued from page 42)

things stand, Holyfield is rated by most as a top-10 champion, while Tyson is headed the other direction. Holyfield is admired for his heart and ability to find a way to win, while Tyson is suspect in those same areas.

Because Holyfield and Tyson have always expressed a desire to be regarded among the greats, the conflict in how they are perceived has set the stage for one of the most widely anticipated heavyweight rematches ever. Dempsey-Tunney, Louis-Max Schmeling, and Ali-Frazier come to mind as rematches whose outcomes left a lasting impression of the fighters involved.

Similarly for Holyfield and Tyson, history awaits them on May 3. ■

Greg Logan covers boxing for the Long Island-based Newsday.

New Faces

(Continued from page 16)

"The Olympics loss was tough, but that will be made up in 1999, when Daniel wins his first world title," said Luis Abreu, an attorney who, along with Francisco Santos, is co-managing Santos.

"We and Top Rank are slowly building Daniel. By the summer he will be fighting eight- and then 10-rounders. Then, in 15 months, he will be a ranked contender with an impressive record, ready to challenge for the welterweight title. If all goes well, I see Daniel eventually earning middleweight and light heavyweight titles within the next 10 years."

Abreu claims his confidence in Santos began to form in 1975, the year the fighter was born in Bayamon, Puerto Rico. Abreu remembers telling Francisco Santos, his close friend and future business partner, that baby Daniel would one day achieve greatness.

"It is rare to see a young man so disciplined," said Abreu, recalling an 11-year-old Santos absorbing himself in his first boxing lesson. "Right now Daniel is frustrated that his professional career means he does not have the time to complete his economics degree at the University of Puerto Rico. But I remind him that after he completes his boxing career, he'll have the time and the money to do whatever he likes."

Santos is enjoying his work, but not the increasing demands put on him as a growing celebrity. "I am a pretty reserved person," he explained. "Now that I am earning a little fame and a little money, the ugliest, sneakiest people suddenly hound me. But I am a pretty grounded guy. I share an apartment with my trainer, and I always consult with my co-managers."

(Continued on page 58)

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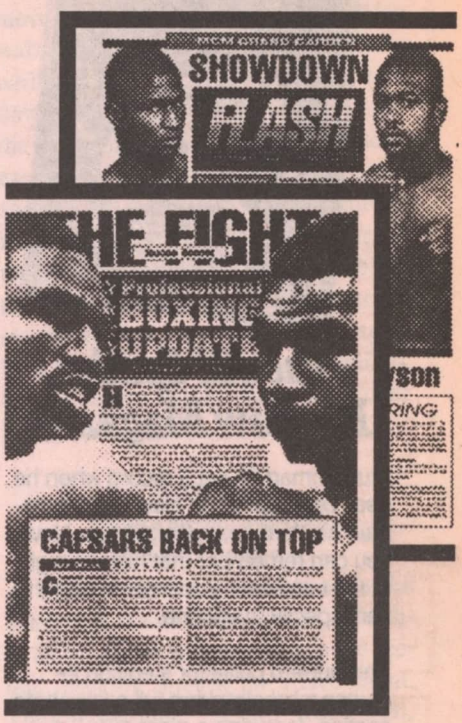

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New Faces

(Continued from page 57)

Santos was hounded by plenty of promoters after the Olympics. His father and Abreu chose Top Rank because Arum offered a better financial and promotional deal than anyone else. So far, the relationship has given Santos television exposure in all of his six professional fights, as well as the kind of patient matchmaking that has resulted in six wins and six knockouts.

"I fully expect that Daniel Santos will in two short years be as popular on the East Coast as Oscar De La Hoya is on the West Coast," Arum said. "He is the best welterweight to come out of the 1996 Olympics."

"Bob Arum compares me to Thomas Hearns, but I see myself more like a combination of Sugar Ray Leonard and Frankie Randall, the two fighters that have most influenced my style," Santos said. "But if he wants to compare me to a great champion like Tommy Hearns, who am I to say otherwise?" ■

Roberto Santiago is a contributing editor for Time Out New York Magazine.

Unification

(Continued from page 47)

Nelson refuses to go down but takes punishment until the final bell. The scores: 116-112 Patterson, 115-112 Patterson, and 115-111 Patterson. Patterson by unanimous decision.

Championship Match:
Arturo Gatti vs. Tracy Patterson

Gatti wants to go punch for punch, but Patterson doesn't. For six rounds, Patterson boxes and Gatti pursues, with exciting exchanges highlighting the chase. Patterson trades evenly during the exchanges, then steps away and peppers Gatti at long range. By the eighth, Gatti's face shows swelling and small nicks. In the 10th, Patterson hurts Gatti, who manages to stay on his feet. Patterson boxes cautiously, but doesn't run during the last two rounds. The scores: 117-110 Patterson, 116-113 Patterson, and 115-112 Patterson. Patterson by unanimous decision. **Undisputed Champion: Tracy Patterson.**

JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHTS

Semifinals:
Antonio Cermeno vs. Daniel Zaragoza

Cermeno wastes no time establishing his superior speed, and by the end of the first round, Zaragoza's face is reddening. Zaragoza works effectively inside, but only in spurts, and Cermeno manages to keep the Mexican off him with stinging combinations and a wicked jab. Zaragoza's punches don't appear to be having much effect. After 10 rounds, Cermeno, who hasn't slowed much, has a commanding lead. In the 11th, Zaragoza breaks through and hurts Cermeno with a barrage, but the Venezuelan refuses to go down. Zaragoza narrowly captures the 12th. No surprises with the scoring: 116-110 Cermeno, 115-110 Cermeno, and 114-111 Cermeno. Cermeno by unanimous decision.

Semifinals:
Vuyani Bungu vs. Junior Jones

The ultra-slick Bungu plays hit-and-run for two rounds and manages to beat Jones to the punch often enough to capture both frames. Jones starts to land the heavier shots in the third and fourth, and Bungu runs into a left hook that drops him. Upon rising, he tries to elude Jones, but the lanky New Yorker swallows Bungu's feeble counters and rocks him with shots to the head and body. An overhand right puts Bungu down for a second time in the round. The South African makes it to his feet in time, but a look into his eyes prompts the referee to end the contest. Jones by TKO in the fourth round.

Championship Match:
Antonio Cermeno vs. Junior Jones

Cermeno unexpectedly hurts Jones in the first, and what figured to be a boxing contest turns into a war. Cermeno attempts to maximize the damage by peppering Jones from all angles. Jones stays upright and blasts an arm-weary Cermeno into the ropes to end the first. Rounds two and three are slugfests, with both fighters ignoring defense and pounding on each other. Jones lands the harder blows, but Cermeno lands with more accuracy and frequency. Both fighters look exhausted by the fourth, and

neither can press the other. Jones starts to rebound in the sixth and seventh. In the eighth, Cermeno comes inside with an uppercut that floors Jones, who barely makes it out of the round. Cermeno takes the ninth handily, cutting Jones in the process. Jones storms back in the 10th and 11th. Cermeno boxes and clinches in the 12th, and Jones does little until seconds before the bell, when he launches a right that buckles Cermeno's knees. The scoring: 115-115 and 115-114 Cermeno (twice). Cermeno by majority decision. **Undisputed Champion: Antonio Cermeno.**

JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHTS

Semifinals:
Hiroshi Kawashima vs.
Yokthai Sithoar

Kawashima mixes boxing and slugging, maximizing the effectiveness of his left-handed stance and driving Sithoar back during the first three rounds. Sithoar takes all the punishment and responds with power shots of his own. In the fourth, Sithoar lands an overhand right and Kawashima hits the canvas. The Japanese rises at seven, but Sithoar knocks him down a second time just before the bell. Sithoar finishes the job one round later, shocking Kawashima's followers. Sithoar by kayo in the fifth round.

Semifinals:
Danny Romero vs. Johnny Tapia

A marquee matchup. Tapia starts strongly, luring Romero into exchanges and landing with combinations before moving out of range. After losing the first three rounds, Romero adjusts and begins to box rather than rely on single shots. The warriors fight evenly through the ninth. Going into the 10th, both fighters are marked. Romero staggers Tapia early in the round, forcing his rival to clinch. A minute later, Tapia is blasted to the canvas. In the 11th, Tapia willingly trades with Romero, but is overpowered in most of the exchanges. The 12th features toe-to-toe action, with Romero again knocking down Tapia. Tapia rises and fights back valiantly, but can't put Romero down. Both fighters are punching at the final bell. The scoring: 115-113 Romero (three times). Romero by unanimous decision.

Championship Match:
Danny Romero vs.
Yokthai Sithoar

Romero boxes for two rounds, avoiding the powerful but wild punches of Sithoar. Romero begins to sit on his punches in the third, and the fighters trade bombs. An unintentional butt opens a cut high on Romero's forehead. In the fourth, Sithoar appears to buckle Romero's knees with a solid hook, but it's the Thai who tastes the canvas when a counter right drops him for a five-count. In the fifth, Romero rocks Sithoar with a four-punch combination. A single right then drops the Thai, who fails to beat the count. Romero by kayo in round five. **Undisputed Champion: Danny Romero.**

JUNIOR FLYWEIGHTS

Semifinals:
Ricardo Lopez vs. Mauricio Pastrana

Lopez and Pastrana lull the crowd to sleep for four rounds by jockeying for position. All they do is trade jabs and move around the ring. There's a sudden wake-up call in the fifth, when Pastrana nails a careless Lopez, knocking him down. Lopez leaps to his feet and after the count initiates a furious minute-long exchange. The sixth and seventh feature spurts of action, with the Colombian beginning to show signs of weakening. In the eighth, Lopez' four-punch combination leads to a knockdown. Pastrana regains his feet, only to be floored again by a barrage. Again he picks himself up, but the referee wisely intervenes. Lopez by eighth-round kayo.

Semifinals:
Saman Sorjaturong vs.
Phitchitnoi Siriwat

Another action-packed bout in the 108-pound division. Sorjaturong unleashes all his power halfway through the second, decking Siriwat for a five-count. Then, seconds before the bell, Sorjaturong does it again. Siriwat elects not to run in the third, and the crowd is thrilled by the exchanges. But when

(Continued on page 60)

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GRANT

Unification

(Continued from page 59)

Siriwat slumps to the canvas at the 1:50 mark, it's clear he's in no shape to continue. Crawling to his feet at the count of 10, the Thai stumbles into the arms of the referee, who calls a halt. Sorjaturong by kayo in round three.

Championship Match:
Ricardo Lopez vs. Saman Sorjaturong

Lopez and Sorjaturong box cautiously for four rounds. In the fifth, it's Sorjaturong who opens up and scores with powerpunches. Lopez counters well and the middle rounds are close, with Lopez matching his boxing ability against Sorjaturong's punching power. In the ninth, Lopez stuns the Thai with a short hook, then drives him to the canvas with six unanswered punches. But in the 10th, Sorjaturong surprises Lopez by downing him with a right. Sorjaturong takes the 11th with an impressive display of body-punching. It's all Lopez in the 12th, as the Mexican wills the spring back into his legs and boxes beautifully from be bell. The scores: 115-115, 115- Sorjaturong, and 115-113 Sorjatur Sorjaturong by majority decis **Undisputed Champion: Sa Sorjaturong.**

Heenan-Sayer

(Continued from page 49)

on Tom Sayers, the greatest fighter of t day. And even those who applauded t recent outlawing of such contests co not deny the appeal of this one. As T *London Times* put it, "The low, the di gusting, the immoral practice of priz fighting as we have been accustomed consider it, has suddenly resumed i interest for, we may truly say, every cla of the population."

And not only in England, for ther was tremendous interest in the States too. In the streets of New York, man could have told you more about John Heenan than they could about Abraham Lincoln, who was to be elected President six months later. And at least in the United Kingdom, the Sayers-Heenan

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fight seemed far more dramatic and fascinating than the tension between North and South, which was to lead to a civil war within a year.

Heenan, who was of Irish origin, had been born 27 years earlier in West Troy, New York. He was recognized as American heavyweight champion and was out to prove himself the best in the world. His opponent, who had lost only once in an illustrious career, was clearly the man he had to beat.

The train that left London that morning carried members of Parliament, as well as soldiers, writers, artists, and even clergymen. Prize fighting had always been a minority interest, but the Sayers-Heenan contest, widely regarded as a trial of strength between the new country and the old, captured the popular imagination. Posters of the two men were everywhere in London, and people queued up in the afternoon to buy newspapers carrying reports of the fight. To quote again from *The Times*, "There is no disguising the fact that this challenge has led to an amount of attention being bestowed upon the prize ring which it has never received before."

At Farnborough in the county of Hampshire some 30 miles southwest of the capital, the train stopped. The passengers then disembarked to follow a group of men carrying ropes and stakes on a cross-country walk. When they reached the Blackwater stream separating Hampshire from Surrey, some in their eagerness tried to leap it, but landed in the water. Their effort was wasted anyway, as the fight was ultimately to take place in Hampshire after all.

When the ground had been chosen, the ropes and stakes were used to mark out a ring 24 feet square. The two contestants could at last be clearly seen, and the contrast was stark. Heenan, who described himself as "half-horse, half-alligator, and a bit of the snapping turtle," was the younger by seven years, the taller by five inches, and the heavier by 40 pounds. But his skin looked as if it might damage more easily. Sayers was heavily backed to win.

Heenan won the toss for choice of corners and positioned himself on the higher ground, with the sun behind him but in his opponent's eyes. There were three officials, one umpire for each man and a referee for both.

First blood was drawn by Sayers, but Heenan's reach gave him a great advantage. The betting, which went on constantly throughout the fight, began to swing in the American's favor.

The report in *The Times* gave some graphic descriptions of the exchanges. The first real damage inflicted by Sayers, for instance, at a time when he appeared to be in serious trouble, was a "terrific smash full in the eye, splitting up the cheek and sending his antagonist reeling like a drunken man back into his corner." As the fight went on, however, it was noted with concern that Sayers was not using his famous right hand at all. It became clear that he was carrying an injury. In fact, he was to fight almost all of the bout one-handed.

The Times reported that Heenan was having much the better of things, and in one of the early rounds " ... striking Sayers on the nose with a blow that was heard all over the meadow, he felled him like an ox." But the Englishman fought back so effectively in this 13-minute round that both men had to be carried to their corners at its conclusion.

The guile of the more experienced Sayers stood him in good stead despite his handicap. Describing some of the punishment meted out, *The Times* observed that "Heenan seemed staggered by these fearful visitations ... His face was gashed with apparently very deep flesh wounds, and the whole right side of his face, eye, nose, and mouth was simply one huge blue lump." And a little later, Sayers " ... showed not the awful marks of punishment visible all over Heenan, who was now a disgusting object." The American's right eye was now completely closed, and Sayers was going after the left.

(Continued on page 63)

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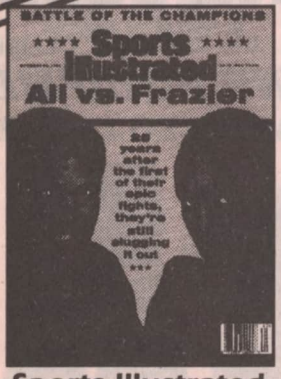

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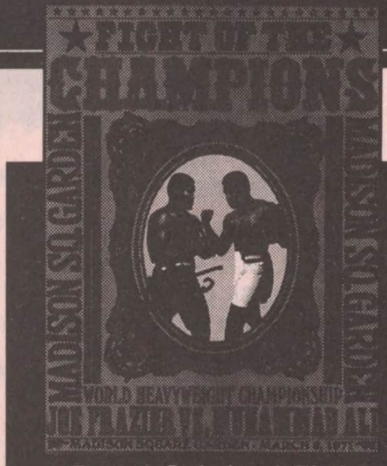

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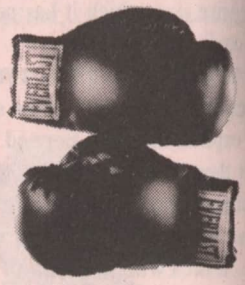

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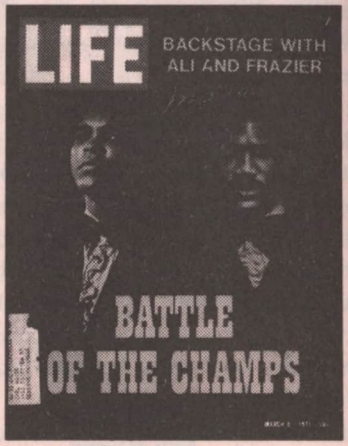

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Heenan-Sayers

(Continued from page 61)

Still, boxing two-fisted and with a great advantage in weight and reach, Heenan seemed to be on top. His skin had indeed proved easily damaged, but his strength was unimpaired. Bare-fisted fights were, of course, never stopped because of cuts, and provided only that he could still see out of one eye, Heenan looked the more likely winner. Several times he knocked Sayers down with punches good enough to finish a lesser man.

But then the fight got into difficulties. The police had by now appeared on the scene to break it up, and were trying to force a way through the hostile crowd. And as if this was not enough, something serious happened in the ring. The fighters being unconstrained by the rules formulated by the Marquis of Queensberry seven years later, Heenan managed to bend his opponent's neck over the ropes and lean on it. Sayers' face turned black, and it appeared he would have been strangled had not both umpires called for the ropes to be cut.

The ring was now defined not by the ropes, but simply by the space left by the eager spectators. Everyone wanted to be as close to the action as possible, and the men were forced to continue in an area only some six feet square. It began to look as if this and the unwelcome presence of the police might bring proceedings to a premature conclusion.

Still, the fight went on, and in what was to be the last round, Heenan, who was by now virtually blind, floored Sayers' second by mistake. It was to be the last telling blow of the fight, because the ring space was diminishing all the time, and it soon became impossible to continue. A draw was declared, and both men were awarded championship belts.

What would have happened had the fight not been abandoned? There were essentially two schools of thought. One held that Sayers would have been knocked out, the other that Heenan would have been totally blinded, and thus at his opponent's mercy. We shall never know. The contest had lasted more than two hours, and there had been between 37 and 42 rounds, depending on whose account you accept.

It was to be Sayers' last fight, for £3,000 was raised for him by public subscription shortly afterward, on condition that he never fight again. He died five years later, and an estimated 100,000 people followed his coffin to Highgate Cemetery in North London. The chief mourner was his mastiff, an effigy of which rests on his tomb.

Heenan continued his career in the ring, retiring after a second fight in England in 1863, when he lost to Tom King. He married (illegally) Adah Isaacs Menken, actress, adventuress, and poet, and died at Green River Station, Wyoming Territory, in 1873, at the age of 40.

They don't make them like Sayers and Heenan anymore. Perhaps it's just as well. ■

Simon Craig is a freelance writer based in London, England.

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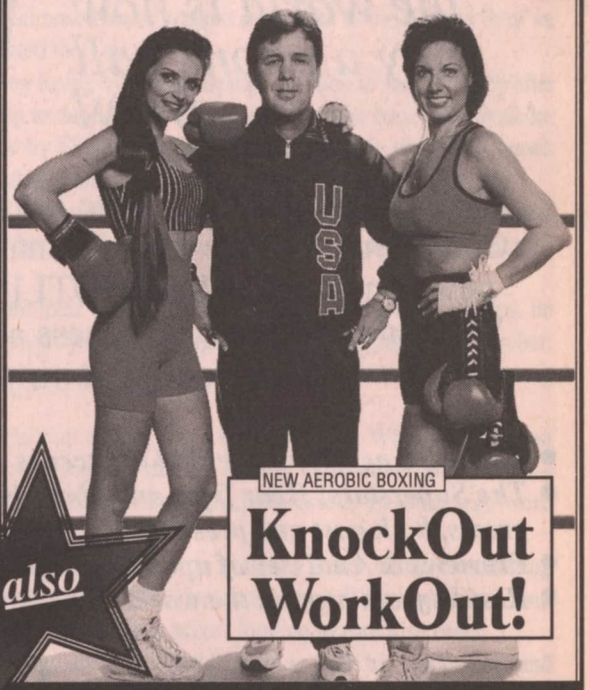

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FISKE ON FIGHTS

By Jack Fiske

For whatever reason, fight fans don't always believe what they see. That's why there are so many title fight rematches—that and the resultant sanctioning fees that are pocketed by the agreeable alphabet organizations. And that's why the customer turnout for those rematches is often considerable, even if the first fight was one-sided.

When Evander Holyfield resuscitated boxing with a drubbing of Mike Tyson, the public's reaction was something like, "Oh, wow! Great! But I don't believe it. I'd like to see if Evander can do it again."

The skeptics will get their wish on May 3.

After the fourth round, their initial encounter wasn't close. Except for the unlikelihood of a miracle punch by Tyson, there was little suspense. Yet in the immediate aftermath of the startling upset there were thousands—make that millions—of die-hard Tyson loyalists who walked away mumbling, "Fluke."

That's why official word of the rematch resulted in a sellout within an hour of tickets going on sale. That's why Holyfield will be able to command a $35-million purse and Tyson $20-million, unprecedented figures. All because the fans don't trust their own eyesight.

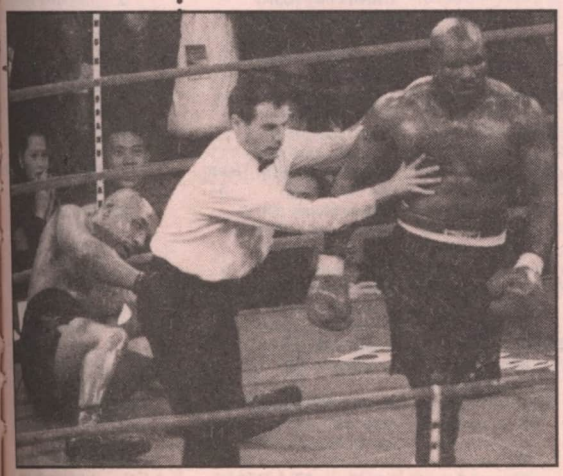
It smacks of the then-astonishing crowd of 104,953 that filled Chicago's Soldiers Field in 1928 to see if new titleholder Gene Tunney could do it again after easily decisioning Jack Dempsey the year before. After the first fight, spectators rubbed their eyes as if they didn't believe what had happened. In the encore, Tunney repeated his performance and won handily despite the furor over "The Long Count."

Ever since James Jeffries gave Bob Fitzsimmons a rematch in 1902, and an opportunity to regain the title Fitz had lost four years earlier, heavyweight champions have almost always granted rematches to the fighters they've dethroned. And in more instances than not, they've repeated their victory.

Oh, there have been a few reverses, like Max Schmeling losing by much-disputed decision to Jack Sharkey after having won the title on a foul; Ezzard Charles twice failing to duplicate two previous wins over Jersey Joe Walcott; Ingemar Johansson being knocked out in his first defense by Floyd Patterson, and then again in their third brawl; Leon Spinks succumbing to reality vs. Muhammad Ali; and Riddick Bowe winning and losing against Holyfield.

In between, Tunney, Rocky Marciano, Sonny Liston, Ali, and Michael Spinks avoided defeats in their initial defenses, rematches all. As challengers, among those who lost in championship rematches were Fitzsimmons, Dempsey, Charles, Patterson, Liston, and Larry Holmes.

So stubborn are the Tyson zealots and so ingrained are their beliefs that as soon as Tyson was unmasked, he was installed as a 2-1 favorite to win the rematch. It's mystifying that in light of what happened in November, and with no excuses from the Tyson camp as to why it happened, the former champion should attract such strong betting support.



Columnist Fiske predicts Holyfield-Tyson II will end like this

Can Holyfield do it all over again? I believe he can. Why not? The first fight plan—back up Tyson so that he couldn't maneuver and punch—worked to near-perfection. As the fight progressed, Tyson's legs were looking for a rest stop.

Holyfield wouldn't permit Tyson to initiate a flurry without retaliating with effective counterpunches. This was a first by a Tyson opponent, and as the rounds mounted, it left "Iron Mike" looking toward his corner.

We all know by now about Holyfield's faith in God, his fearlessness and positive attitude. Combine those intangibles with his strength in the clinches, the underrated zip on his punches, and the psychological edge following his knockout victory, and he doesn't have to change to win again.

It's the other guy who has to come in with a better fight plan. Can Tyson do that in five months? Can he unlearn some of what he's picked up in 13 *years?* It's unlikely.

Holyfield in eight. ■

WORLDWIDE RATINGS

The ratings of the three major governing bodies recognized by The Ring are supplied by the organizations themselves. They are updated on these pages as soon as they are made available to us. In this issue, the WBC, WBA, & IBF ratings were all compiled as of January 1997.

HEAVYWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Vacant	C	–	–
Evander Holyfield (USA)	–	C	–
Michael Moorer (USA)	–	–	C
Lennox Lewis (GB)	1	10	6
Oliver McCall (USA)	2	1	1
Mike Tyson (USA)	3	2	2
Henry Akinwande (GB)	4	–	–
Zeljko Mavrovic (CROA)	5	9	10
Orlin Norris (USA)	6	4	11
David Tua (NZ)	7	–	8
Andrew Golota (POL)	8	7	–
Corrie Sanders (SA)	9	–	3
Ray Mercer (USA)	10	–	9
Francois Botha (SA)	–	3	4
Tony Tucker (USA)	11	5	12
Vaughn Bean (USA)	13	6	5
Bruce Seldon (USA)	–	8	–
Obed Sullivan (USA)	21	–	7

CRUISERWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Marcelo Dominguez (ARG)	C	–	–
Nate Miller (USA)	–	C	–
Adolpho Washington (USA)	–	–	C
Fabrice Tiozzo (FRA)	1	–	–
Akim Tafer (FRA)	2	7	–
Torsten May (GER)	3	9	6
Robert Daniels (USA)	4	3	–
Terry Dunstan (GB)	5	5	9
David Izeqwire (NIG)	6	12	7
Jacob Mofokeng (SA)	7	–	3
Chris Okoh (GB)	8	–	10
Juan Carlos Gomez (CUBA)	9	4	–
Yosukezan Nishijima (JAP)	10	–	–
Alexander Gurov (UKR)	–	1	4
Ezequiel Paixao (BRA)	–	2	–
Uriah Grant (USA)	27	6	1
Rick Lamontagne (USA)	–	8	–
Ken Murphy (USA)	–	10	8
Vacant	–	–	2
Arthur Williams (USA)	–	–	5

LT. HEAVYWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Roy Jones (USA)	C	–	–
Virgil Hill (USA)	–	C	C
William Guthrie (USA)	1	2	1
Michael Nunn (USA)	2	5	–
Mike McCallum (USA)	3	10	10
Eddy Smulders (HOLL)	4	1	6
Montell Griffin (USA)	5	–	–
Graciano Rocchigiani (GER)	6	–	5
Crawford Ashley (GB)	7	–	4
Merqui Sosa (DR)	8	8	–
Muhammad Siluvangi (ZAI)	9	–	–
Nicky Piper (GB)	10	–	–
Lou Del Valle (USA)	–	3	3
Leif Keiski (SWE)	–	4	–
Tony Byrd (USA)	–	6	–
Dario Matteoni (ARG)	26	7	–
Darrin Allen (USA)	29	9	2
Ray Berry (USA)	30	–	7
Frank Tate (USA)	–	–	8
John Scully (USA)	–	–	9

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Robin Reid (GB)	C	–	–
Frank Liles (USA)	–	C	–
Roy Jones (USA)	–	–	C
Henry Wharton (GB)	1	2	3
Thulane Malinga (SA)	2	–	–
Jorge Castro (ARG)	3	–	–
Vincenzo Nardiello (ITA)	4	–	9
Andrei Shkalikov (RUS)	5	8	11
Frederic Seillier (FRA)	6	1	4
Joe Calzaghe (GB)	7	–	7
Zafarou Ballogou (TOGO)	8	6	10
Chris Johnson (CAN)	9	11	–
Joseph Kiwanuka (UGA)	10	10	–
Gary Ballard (SA)	12	3	2
Mauricio Amaral (BRA)	16	4	1
Tim Littles (USA)	–	5	–
Mike Makata (NZ)	–	7	–
Charles Brewer (USA)	17	9	1
Tony Byrd (USA)	29	–	5
Bryant Brannon (USA)	–	–	6

MIDDLEWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Keith Holmes (USA)	C	–	–
William Joppy (USA)	–	C	–
Bernard Hopkins (USA)	–	–	C
Quincy Taylor (USA)	1	–	–
Hassine Cherifi (FRA)	2	10	6
Stephane Ouelette (CAN)	3	–	–
Robert McCracken (GB)	4	–	3
Julian Jackson (USA)	5	6	–
Giovanni Pretorius (SA)	6	–	–
John David Jackson (USA)	7	–	2
Richie Woodhall (GB)	8	–	–
Kevin Palmer (USA)	9	–	–
Brian Barbosa (USA)	10	7	7
Peter Venancio (BRA)	12	1	–
Darren Obah (AUSTRL)	–	2	–
Paul Vaden (USA)	–	3	5
Otis Grant (CAN)	–	4	12
Glen Johnson (USA)	13	5	8
Anthony Stephens (USA)	–	8	–
Anthony Andrews (GUY)	21	9	–
Vacant	–	–	1
Lloyd Bryan (USA)	–	–	4
Andrew Council (USA)	–	12	9
Branco Sabot (CRO)	–	–	10

JR. MIDDLEWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Terry Norris (USA)	C	–	C
Laurent Boudouani (FRA)	–	C	–
David Ciarlante (ITA)	1	9	–
Raul Marquez (USA)	2	5	1
Troy Waters (AUSTRL)	3	–	–
Julio Cesar Vasquez (ARG)	4	7	12
Faouzi Hattab (FRA)	5	–	–
Said Bennajem (FRA)	6	–	–
Paul Vaden (USA)	7	–	–
Ernie Artango (AUSTRL)	8	–	–
Carl Daniels (USA)	9	1	2
Javier Castillejo (SPA)	10	6	–
Guillermo Jones (PAN)	14	2	5
Robert McCracken (GB)	–	3	–
Giovanni Pretorious (SA)	–	4	3
Alejandro Ugueto (VEN)	–	8	–
Tony Menefee (USA)	–	10	–
Anthony Stephens (USA)	13	–	4
Steve Foster (GB)	–	–	6
Mark Breland (USA)	–	–	7
Adrian Dodson (GB)	20	–	8
Rossman Henry (COL)	–	–	9
Jairo Siris (COL)	–	–	10

WELTERWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Pernell Whitaker (USA)	C	–	–
Ike Quartey (GHA)	–	C	–
Felix Trinidad (PR)	–	–	C
Patrick Charpentier (FRA)	1	2	1
Derrell Coley (USA)	2	5	8
Wilfredo Rivera (PR)	3	10	–
Jose Luis Navarro (SPA)	4	–	–
Andrei Pestryaev (RUS)	5	1	–
Ariel Chaves (ARG)	6	–	–
Diobelys Hurtado (CUBA)	7	–	–
Robert West (USA)	8	–	–
Ralph Jones (USA)	9	12	–
Suk Hyun Yun (KOR)	10	–	–
Sean Sullivan (NZ)	–	3	–
Oba Carr (USA)	–	4	10
Andrew Murray (GUY)	26	6	7
Jeff Malcolm (AUSTRL)	–	7	–
Romallis Ellis (USA)	–	8	–
Tony Martin (USA)	12	9	4
Vincent Pettway (USA)	–	–	2
Hitonon Sato (JAP)	–	–	3
Mahenge Zulu (ZAI)	–	–	5
Hugo Pineda (COL)	–	–	6
Juan Negron (PR)	–	11	9

JR. WELTERWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Oscar De La Hoya (USA)	C	–	–
Khalid Rahilou (FRA)	–	C	–
Kostya Tszyu (AUSTRL)	–	–	C
Julio Cesar Chavez (MEX)	1	1	–

Miguel Angel Gonzalez (MEX)	2	2	–
Rafael Ruelas (MEX)	3	–	8
Ismael Chaves (ARG)	4	–	–
Soren Sondergaard (DEN)	5	8	3
Charles Murray (USA)	6	6	7
Frankie Randall (USA)	7	5	–
Sharmba Mitchell (USA)	8	4	2
Walter Crucce (ARG)	9	–	–
Jong Hoon Yuh (KOR)	10	–	–
Jose Barbosa (VEN)	–	3	–
Viacheslav Yanovsky (KAZ)	–	7	–
Virgil McClendon (USA)	–	9	5
Yusao Arai (JAP)	–	10	–
Freddie Pendleton (USA)	–	–	1
Jermal Corbin (USA)	–	–	4
Jan Bergman (SA)	–	–	6
Leonardo Mas (PR)	–	–	9
Nicolas Cervera (COL)	11	–	10

LIGHTWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Jean-Baptiste Mendy (FRA)	**C**	**–**	**–**
Orzubek Nazarov (JAP)	**–**	**C**	**–**
Philip Holiday (SA)	**–**	**–**	**C**
Steve Johnston (USA)	1	5	–
Cesar Bazan (MEX)	2	–	–
Angel Mona (FRA)	3	2	–
Hiroyuki Sakamoto (JAP)	4	6	12
Leavander Johnson (USA)	5	–	–
Billy Irwin (CAN)	6	7	–
Alberto Sicurella (ARG)	7	3	–
Manuel Fernandez (FRA)	8	–	–
Jong Kwon Baek (KOR)	9	–	–
Jimmy Rangel (COL)	10	–	–
Leavander Johnson (USA)	–	1	4
Carlos Fernandez (PORT)	–	4	–
Ivan Robinson (USA)	–	8	3
Samir Cherrad (FRA)	24	9	–
Billy Schwer (GB)	19	10	9
Demetrius Ceballos (USA)	29	–	1
Eduardo Morales (ARG)	20	11	2
Miguel Julio (COL)	–	–	5
Justin Rowsell (AUSTRL)	–	–	6
Shane Mosley (USA)	13	–	7
Fred Ladd (USA)	–	–	8
Jose Zuniga (COL)	23	–	10

JR. LIGHTWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Azumah Nelson (GHA)	**C**	**–**	**–**
Yong Soo Choi (KOR)	**–**	**C**	**–**
Arturo Gatti (USA)	**–**	**–**	**C**
Anatoly Alexandrov (RUS)	1	2	5
Gabriel Ruelas (USA)	2	–	–
Robert Garcia (USA)	3	6	2
Genaro Hernandez (USA)	4	7	–
Julien Lorcy (FRA)	5	5	11
Ulrich Johnson (TRIN)	6	–	–
P.J. Gallagher (GB)	7	–	12
Djamel Lifa (FRA)	8	8	8
Takanori Hatakeyama (JAP)	9	–	10
Douglas Villarreal (COL)	10	9	–
Lakva Sim (MON)	–	1	–
Gilbert Serrano (VEN)	–	3	–
Carlos Gerena (PR)	–	4	–
Edson Xuxa Nacimento (BRA)	–	10	–
Tracy Patterson (USA)	–	–	1
Harold Warren (USA)	23	–	3
Jaime Rangel (COL)	–	–	4
Cliff Samardin (AUSTRL)	–	–	6
Ramon Ledon (CUBA)	–	–	7
Wilson Rodriguez (DR)	–	–	9

FEATHERWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Laisito Espinosa (PHIL)	**C**	**–**	**–**
Wilfredo Vazquez (PR)	**–**	**C**	**–**
Tom Johnson (USA)	**–**	**–**	**C**
Carlos Rios (ARG)	1	2	9
Cesar Soto (MEX)	2	–	–
Billy Hardy (GB)	3	11	4
Jesus Chavez (USA)	4	–	–
Alejandro Gonzalez (MEX)	5	–	–
Iver Beleno (COL)	6	9	6
Mehdi Labdouni (FRA)	7	–	–
Frederic Perez (FRA)	8	10	–
Manuel Medina (MEX)	9	–	–
Koji Matsumoto (JAP)	10	–	–
Yuji Watanabe (JAP)	–	1	–
Victor Polo (COL)	–	3	7
Rafael Meran (DR)	–	4	–
Angel Vasquez (PR)	–	5	–
Fred Norwood (USA)	–	6	–
Tony Wehbe (INDO)	–	7	–
Roque Cassiani (COL)	–	8	–
Hector Lizarraga (USA)	–	–	1
Welcome Ncita (SA)	–	–	2
Jose Badillo (PR)	–	–	3
November Ntshingila (AUSTRL)	13	–	5
Carlos Gerena (PR)	–	–	8
Arnulfo Castillo (USA)	–	–	10

JR. FEATHERWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Daniel Zaragoza (MEX)	**C**	**–**	**–**
Antonio Cermeno (VEN)	**–**	**C**	**–**
Vuyani Bungu (SA)	**–**	**–**	**C**
Erik Morales (MEX)	1	2	–
Joichiro Tatsuyoshi (JAP)	2	–	–
Wayne McCullough (IRE)	3	–	–
Hector Acero-Sanchez (DR)	4	–	–
Marco Antonio Barrera (MEX)	5	–	–
Martin Krastev (BUL)	6	5	7
Enrique Sanchez (MEX)	7	7	–
Enrique Jupiter (MEX)	8	–	–
Reynante Jamili (PHIL)	9	–	–
Jesus Salud (USA)	10	–	10
Rafael Del Valle (PR)	–	1	–
Kennedy McKinney (USA)	–	3	–
Yober Ortega (VEN)	–	4	–
Yuichi Kasai (JAP)	–	6	8
Serge Poilbian (FRA)	21	8	–
Enrique Angeles (MEX)	19	9	–
Bugiarso (INDO)	–	10	–
Anell Barotillo (AUSTRL)	–	–	1
Vacant	–	–	2
Kennedy McKinney (USA)	23	–	3
Victor Llerena (COL)	–	–	4
Vincent Belcastro (ITA)	–	–	5
Nurhuda (INDO)	–	–	6
Angel Chacon (PR)	22	–	9

BANTAMWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Siromongkol Singmanasuk (THAI)	**C**	**–**	**–**
Daorung C. Siriwat (THAI)	**–**	**C**	**–**
Mbulelo Botile (SA)	**–**	**–**	**C**
Victor Rabanales (MEX)	1	–	–
Pastor Maurin (ARG)	2	8	–
Paul Ayala (USA)	3	6	–
In Jin Chi (KOR)	4	–	–
Dario Azuaga (PAR)	5	–	6
Jorge Monsalvo (COL)	6	–	–
Setsuo Kawamasu (JAP)	7	9	–
Gerardo Martinez (MEX)	8	11	–
Jesus Sarabia (MEX)	9	–	–
Shaszi Nitta (JAP)	10	–	7
Abraham Torres (VEN)	–	1	–
Lukhin CP Gym (THAI)	–	2	–
Yong Hoon Lee (KOR)	–	3	–
Nana Konadu (GHA)	–	4	–
Angel Chacon (PR)	–	5	–
Tim Austin (USA)	16	7	1
Joichiro Tatsuyoshi (JAP)	–	10	9
Adrian Kaspari (INDO)	21	–	2
Jesus Perez (COL)	18	–	3
Rafael Del Valle (PR)	–	–	4
Wilson Alcorro (COL)	–	–	5
Jess Maca (PHIL)	–	–	8
Ancee Gedeon (USA)	–	–	10

JR. BANTAMWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Hiroshi Kawashima (JAP)	**C**	**–**	**–**
Yokthai Sithoar (THAI)	**–**	**C**	**–**
Danny Romero (USA)	**–**	**–**	**C**
Gerry Penalosa (PHIL)	1	5	–
Joel Luna Zarate (MEX)	2	7	–
Luis Bolanos (COL)	3	10	–
Jose Rafael Sosa (ARG)	4	–	–
Luis Benavides (COL)	5	12	8
Veeraphol Sahaprom (THAI)	6	3	–
Evangelio Perez (PAN)	7	–	–
In Joo Cho (KOR)	8	–	–
Jaji Sibali (SA)	9	–	1
Raffy Montalban (PHIL)	10	–	–
Aquiles Guzman (VEN)	–	1	–
Dario Azuaga (PAR)	–	2	–
Alimi Goitia (VEN)	–	4	–
Jesus Rojas (VEN)	–	6	–
Satoshi Iida (JAP)	25	8	7
Andy Agosto (PR)	14	9	4
Ubadel Soto (COL)	–	–	2
Ratanachai Sor Voraphin (THAI)	23	–	3
Sombak Singchawan (THAI)	–	–	5
Juvenal Berrio (COL)	–	–	6
Jose Sosa (ARG)	–	–	9
Wilfredo Vargas (PR)	–	–	10

FLYWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Yuri Arbachakov (RUS)	**C**	**–**	**–**
Jose Bonilla (VEN)	**22**	**C**	**–**
Mark Johnson (USA)	**12**	**–**	**C**
Isaias Zamudio (USA)	1	3	10
Chatchai Sasakul (THAI)	2	–	1
Alejandro Montiel (MEX)	3	9	9
Gabriel Mira (MEX)	4	–	–
Yong Soon Chang (KOR)	5	8	–
Chokchai Chokviwat (THAI)	6	–	–
Jesper Jensen (DEN)	7	5	4
Salvatore Fanni (ITA)	8	11	–
Peter Culshaw (GB)	9	4	–
Paul Weir (GB)	10	–	–
Evangelino Perez (PAN)	–	1	2
Saen Sow Ploenchit (THAI)	–	2	–
Hiroki Ioka (JAP)	–	6	–
Takashi Ohba (JAP)	28	7	–
Leo Gamez (VEN)	–	10	–
Ferid Ben Jeddou (TUN)	–	–	3
Irene Pacheco (COL)	–	–	5
Yodchingchai Sornthong (THAI)	–	–	6
Will Grigsby (USA)	–	–	7
Ilido Julio (COL)	–	–	8

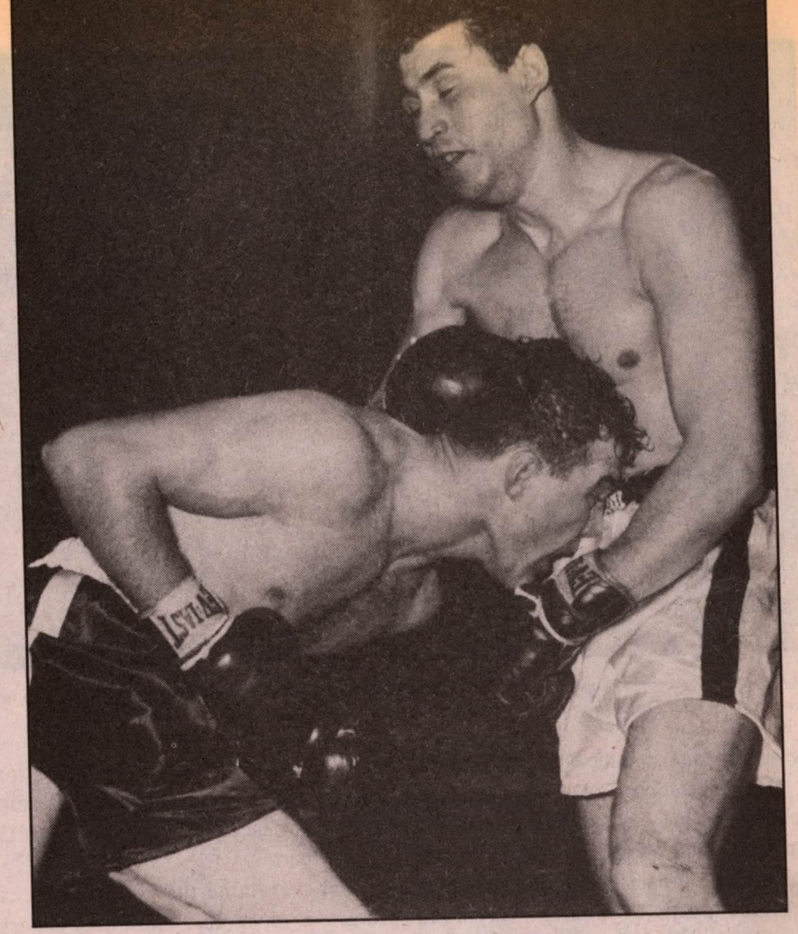
JR. FLYWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Saman Sorjaturong (THAI)	**C**	**–**	**–**
Pichitnoi C. Siriwat (THAI)	**14**	**C**	**–**
Michael Carbajal (USA)	**–**	**2**	**C**
Ladislao Vazquez (MEX)	1	–	–
Yosam Choi (KOR)	2	9	–
Melchor Cob Castro (MEX)	3	–	–
Manuel Jesus Herrera (DR)	4	8	6
Michael Carbajal (USA)	5	–	–
Shiro Yahiro (JAP)	6	–	–
Kaaj Chartbandi (THAI)	7	–	–
Phanieng Sasiprabha (THAI)	8	10	–
Micky Cantwell (GB)	9	–	–
Ramon Euroza (MEX)	10	–	–
Hadao C.P. Gym (THAI)	–	1	–
Sinn Ploenchit (THAI)	–	3	–
Yong Jin Kim (KOR)	20	4	11
Suzuki Kabato (JAP)	–	5	–
Keiji Yamaguchi (JAP)	15	6	–
Carlos Murillo (PAN)	–	7	3
Mauricio Pastrana (COL)	–	–	1
Anis Roga (INDO)	–	–	2
Onewin Chareon (THAI)	–	–	4
Nelson Dieppa (PR)	–	–	5
Takashi Shiohama (JAP)	12	–	7
Jesus Chong (MEX)	–	–	8
Juan Cordoba (ARG)	–	–	9
Eric Griffin (USA)	18	–	10

STRAWWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Ricardo Lopez (MEX)	**C**	**–**	**–**
Rosendo Alvarez (NIC)	**–**	**C**	**–**
Ratanapol Sow Voraphin (THAI)	**–**	**–**	**C**
Rocky Lin (JAP)	1	1	–
Sinn Sow Ploenchit (THAI)	2	–	–
Ala Villamor (PHIL)	3	–	10
Hyung Sok Kang (KOR)	4	–	–
Andy Tabanas (PHIL)	5	7	2
Morgan Ndumo (SA)	6	–	–
Payak Nakornluang (THAI)	7	10	–
Lindi Memani (SA)	8	–	–
Carmelo Caceres (PHIL)	9	–	–
Ratanapol Sow Vorapin (THAI)	10	–	–
Jose Garcia (COL)	–	2	–
Kwanjai Battery (THAI)	–	3	–
Chana Porpaoin (THAI)	–	4	–
Sung Tae Lim (KOR)	–	5	–
Songkram Porpaoin (THAI)	–	6	–
Fah Sung Ponasawang (THAI)	–	8	–
Pongsaklek Sithanonsak (THAI)	30	9	–
Juan Herrera (COL)	13	–	1
Osvaldo Guerrero (MEX)	–	–	3
Mongol Charoen (THAI)	–	–	4
Ernesto Rubillar (PHIL)	28	–	5
Wondee Charoen (THAI)	–	–	6
Luis Doria (COL)	–	–	7
Lee Sandoval (NIC)	18	–	8
Keysuke Yokoyama (JAP)	29	–	9

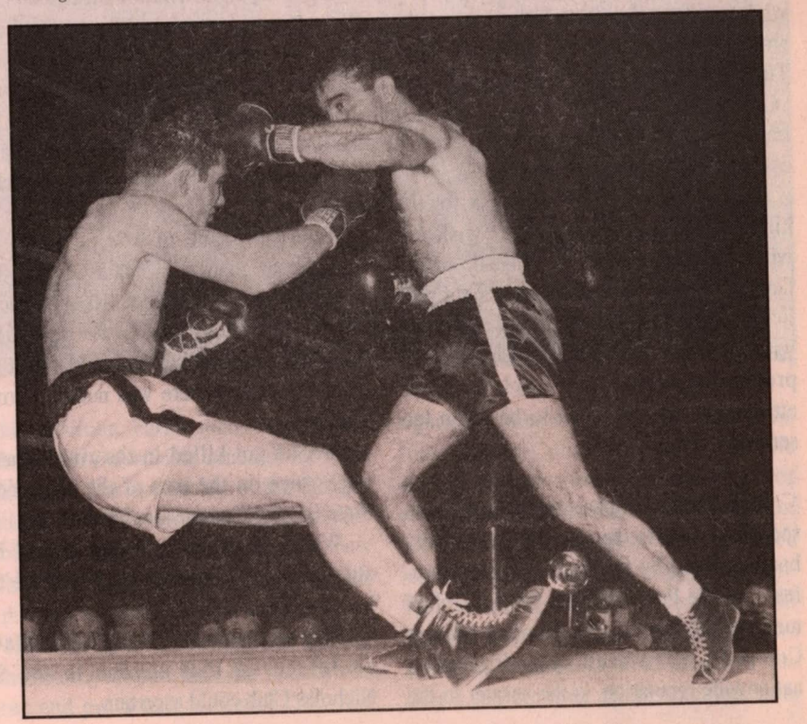
RING CLASSIC

IN DEFENSE OF BOXING

played for ex-Marine Laverne Roach, who died '24 from injuries sustained in a bout vs. New iddleweight George Small. The funeral service East Orange, New Jersey. Roach's body was to his boyhood home in Plainview, Texas.



Only seconds after this photo was taken during the 10th round of the Small-Roach battle at St. Nicholas Arena (above), Roach (crouching) collapsed from what doctors described as "probable brain hemorrhage and possible skull fracture." Many observers believe Roach never recovered from the beating he absorbed at the hands of Marcel Cerdan two years before the Small fight (below). The Frenchman, who was only a few fights from the middleweight title, halted Roach in the eighth round at Madison Square Garden in March 1948.



By Nat Fleischer

Again the hue and cry that follows tragedy in the ring has been raised for the abolishment of boxing. It will ever be thus, regardless of the medical care under state supervision given to competitors, amateurs and professionals alike. Boxing has always been the goat in these vicious attacks, and will continue to be so.

There is no need for me to go into deta again reviewing ring deaths and compari them with those in other sports. It's an old top by now.

Boxing's latest casualty, the death of a fi young man, a boy of excellent characte Laverne Roach, following his knockout at t hands of George Small, a New York mi dleweight, has started a new campaign agai

he sport. But neither this attack, nor those that will follow when another boy is either injured or killed, will bring about the death of boxing. It is too well-entrenched and has too many faithful, unbiased followers to meet the fate that its opponents wish for it.

On the day that a New York morning paper with a wide circulation carried an editorial requesting that "Boxing, The Sport Of Murder,"

From THE RING, May 1950

One day after the bout, Small breaks down during an interview while meeting the press. Roach had died only 14 hours after their fight. With Small is handler Sol Gold.

be abolished to save the youth of America, it also published a full page and two columns on the death of Roach, and in a small box, with an insignificant head compared to the banner line on Roach's passing, the death of Charles Raymond Espenan, a Notre Dame football player who succumbed to a broken neck following a gymnasium workout during which he was doing flips.

Did the editor of that morning paper, who, incidentally, occupied a seat at the ringside of the thrilling Paddy Young-Tuzo Portuguez fight in the Garden that same night, and seemed to enjoy it immensely, ask that the physical education course at Notre Dame be abolished?

Of course not! Those who ask for the killing of boxing through state legislation will often be found at the ringside of the Golden Gloves bouts or professional fights in the House that Tex Built, not alone, but with friends, all enjoying themselves in all probability with Annie Oakleys. Their attacks are too one-sided to be taken too seriously.

***

New York's medical staff for boxing is second to none in the country. Its advisory board, headed by Dr. Frank Ferlaino, professor at the Post-Graduate Hospital, chief medical adviser for the General Motors Company, and a heart specialist with a nationwide reputation, is the answer to the killjoys who, at the least provocation, become public-spirited citizens demanding that boxing be abolished because it is the "killer sport."

Let's examine the case of Laverne Roach, a young man whose first amateur bouts I refereed in Albuquerque, New Mexico, when he was only 15 years old and scaled 114 pounds. Six competent medical men examined him within the week of his fight with Small, twice on the day when he engaged in his ill-fated contest. Two specialists X-rayed his nose after he had complained of pains and found nothing wrong with him, yet they gave him the option of withdrawing from the fight if in his opinion he felt he was not physically prepared.

Every precaution was taken by his manager to guard him against injury. His own nose and throat specialist, a physician nationally recognized in his specialty, informed Laverne that he could fulfill his contract because there was nothing wrong with him.

Yet he got killed in the ring! Was it negligence on the part of the New York State Boxing Commission? Indeed not.

Was it negligence on the part of his able manager, John Abood, to whom the boy was like a son? It was not.

Was it poor officiating? Not that I could see, or that anyone in the St. Nicholas Club could ascertain.

Let's look at it philosophically. H time had come, as had that of Marc Cerdan, who had previously given Roach beating in the Garden. It was an act God, and no one person can be blamed f the death. The medical examiner, D Gonzales, who has handled thousands cases for the State of New York, ruled th it was an accidental death caused by t bursting of a vein. He died from a subdur hemorrhage.

***

Nothing was found in the autopsy t indicate that Roach had suffered from previous injury, despite his knockout b Cerdan, a bout in which he took a shellack ing.

Probably the beating he received in th bout with the Frenchman did soften him but if so, the autopsy didn't show it Personally, I believe that, as in the case of Ernie Schaaf, the Cerdan battle had much to do with Roach's death.

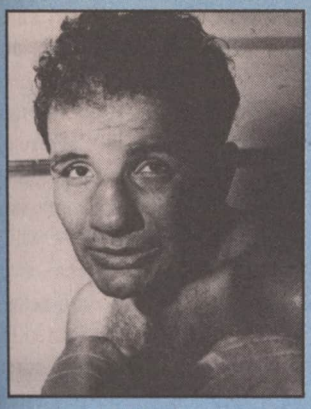
When Shaaf was badly beaten by Max Baer in Chicago, there was no outward indication that his resistance to punishment had been lowered by that shellacking, nor that his brain had been injured, yet when Primo Carnera delivered an ordinary pushover punch, Ernie collapsed and passed away in the Polyclinic Hospital.

Unfortunately, there is no way, according to the medical profession, of detecting such injuries, despite the use of the encephalograph or the X-ray, but someday it is hoped that science will find a method. Until then, we must depend on the care given to the boxers by the medical examiners prior to a contest and after.

It has been pointed out that perhaps the long layoff of Roach had much to do with the fate he met. In my opinion, such periods of inactivity as Roach had are bound to have an effect on a fighter. That has been proved in the cases of many of the veterans who, after having hung up their gloves when the war got underway, returned in later years for comebacks. How many made the grade? Only a few of the hundred or more who tried it.

In the case of Roach, his manager, Johnny Abood, took personal charge of his comeback. He trained him for three months to make certain that his boy was physically fit, and, when so satisfied, booked him with ordinary talent. Hence it was not an ill-trained fighter who faced

THE RING RATINGS, *May 1950*



Jake LaMotta

HEAVYWEIGHTS
World Champ: Title Vacant
1. Ezzard Charles
2. Joe Walcott
3. Lee Oma
4. Bruce Woodcock
5. Lee Savold
6. John Holman
7. Pat Valentino
8. Abel Cestac
9. Kid Riviera
10. Roland LaStarza

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS
World Champ: Joey Maxim
1. Archie Moore
2. Bert Lytell
3. Bob Satterfield
4. Leonard Morrow
5. Tommy Yarosz
6. Nick Barone
7. Bob Murphy
8. Billy Smith
9. Lloyd Marshall
10. Freddie Mills

MIDDLEWEIGHTS
World Champ: Jake LaMotta
1. Ray Robinson
2. Dave Sands
3. Robert Villemain
4. Tiberio Mitri
5. Art Towne
6. Steve Belloise
7. Lee Sala
8. Laurent Dauthuille
9. Paddy Young
10. Tony Janiro

WELTERWEIGHTS
World Champ: Ray Robinson
1. Gene Burton
2. George Costner
3. Billy Graham
4. Lester Felton
5. Kid Gavilan
6. Ron Delaney
7. Charley Fusari
8. Frankie Fernandez
9. Otis Graham
10. Bernard Docusen

LIGHTWEIGHTS
World Champ: Ike Williams
1. Arthur King
2. Freddie Dawson
3. Rudy Cruz
4. Art Aragon
5. Roberto Proietti
6. Sonny Boy West
7. Wallace Smith
8. Percy Bassett
9. Solly Cantor
10. Johnny Gonsalves

FEATHERWEIGHTS
World Champ: Willie Pep
1. Sandy Saddler
2. Ray Famechon
3. Ronnie Clayton
4. Charley Riley
5. Henry Davis
6. Miguel Acevedo
7. Jock Bonas
8. Tirso del Rosario
9. Glen Flanagan
10. Luis de Santiago

BANTAMWEIGHTS
World Champ: Manuel Ortiz
1. Luis Romero
2. Danny O'Sullivan
3. Elley Bennett
4. Luis Galvani
5. Theo Medina
6. Vic Toweel
7. Bobby Boland
8. Reuben Smith
9. Luis Castillo
10. Vic Herman

FLYWEIGHTS
World Champ: Rinty Monaghan
1. Honore Pratesi
2. Terry Allen
3. Jan Sneyers
4. Maurice Sandeyron
5. Peter Keenan
6. Taffy Hancock
7. Norman Lewis
8. Mickey Hill
9. Chai Sitphol
10. Willi Faerber

Small and those before that fatal meeting.

Roach had been passed as physically fit after every examination for his four contests during his comeback, and at no time was anything found that could have disqualified him.

Therefore, no blame can be laid at the feet of manager Abood, the boxing commissions that had licensed Laverne for his comeback, or the medical men who passed on his condition. Furthermore, he was well in front after the seventh round of his fight with Small. The conclusion of the District Attorney's office and the medical examiner of New York that Roach's death was accidental is the only logical one that could be reached.

However, it is my opinion that boxing commissions should take the bull by the horns and put a halt to comebacks. If a fighter has gone into retirement because he found himself physically unfit, then he should be kept in retirement. That, of course, would not include cases like that of Joe Louis, who, though he has announced his retirement, is actively engaged in exhibitions and is steadily in training. Our records show that most of those who attempted comebacks were forced to quit after a few contests. Quite a number were

Small is sworn in at a hearing conducted by the New York State Athletic Commission, which later ruled that no safety measures had been overlooked during the Small-Roach fight.

knocked out in their first or second battle and had to call a halt, and most of those who continued invariably gave such poor performances that their value as drawing cards was almost nil and they quit.

Many good youngsters are coming to the front. Let's give them the chance they deserve. Let's forget the "old-timers" and the comeback artists who continue to headline many of the nation's leading shows.

We have seen a few of these up-and-coming lads in recent months, boys who are not only crowd-pleasers, but who show promise of getting somewhere. Paddy Young, Irish Jimmy Rooney, Dennis Pat Brady, Tommy Collins, Joe Miceli, Rocky Marciano, Roland LaStarza, the Flanagan brothers, Johnny Breeze, Bill Bossio, Charley Titone, Georgie Kaplan, Lester Felton, Paul Pender, Solly Cantor, Art Aragon, and Harry Matthews, among others, are the type of fighters to whom we should give some attention.

Let's give them the opportunity we have been giving to the men who have passed their usefulness as drawing attractions, and in that way we can build up the sport and at the same time place a curb on injuries. Retired fighters who have been brought back after long periods of idleness are the men who invite injuries and ring deaths.

***

Deaths can happen anywhere and at any time. Often, even though the minutest details are followed in preventative measures, the Grim Reaper takes his toll. The doctors, district attorney, and grand jury have called Roach's death accidental, and that's exactly what it was—the kind of mishap that is likely to happen any time an athlete indulges in physical combat or in contact competition with another athlete.

Let's again examine the record of last year's deaths so frequently cited by those who are crying, "Stop boxing!" There were 18 deaths listed as itemized in *The Ring Record Book For 1950*, and those figures were not confined to the United States. They covered the entire world. In our country, with upwards of 6,000 professional boxers registered and licensed by our boxing commissions, there were nine fatalities, of which only five were professionals.

Let's go a step further in our analysis. Of the five, two were not even killed in actual boxing matches. One was killed while in training in a gymnasium without any supervision at hand, and the other also died in a gymnasium, in a YMCA, following a head injury.

Of the 18 deaths, six were among amateurs, where supposedly the supervision is extremely strict, and the remainder was scattered over the world—two in Algiers, two in Mexico, and one each in Honolulu, Frankfurt, Singapore, Sydney, Austra and Italy. Considering that our reco show close to 20,000 professionals co peting in world boxing, the percentage deaths is less than in any other com sport.

Since the Notre Dame athlete w broke his neck was a senior studying fo degree in physical education, and the bod flip exercises were part of the routine exe cises taken by all, would those who wa boxing killed ask that physical educatio courses in our colleges be abolished?

***

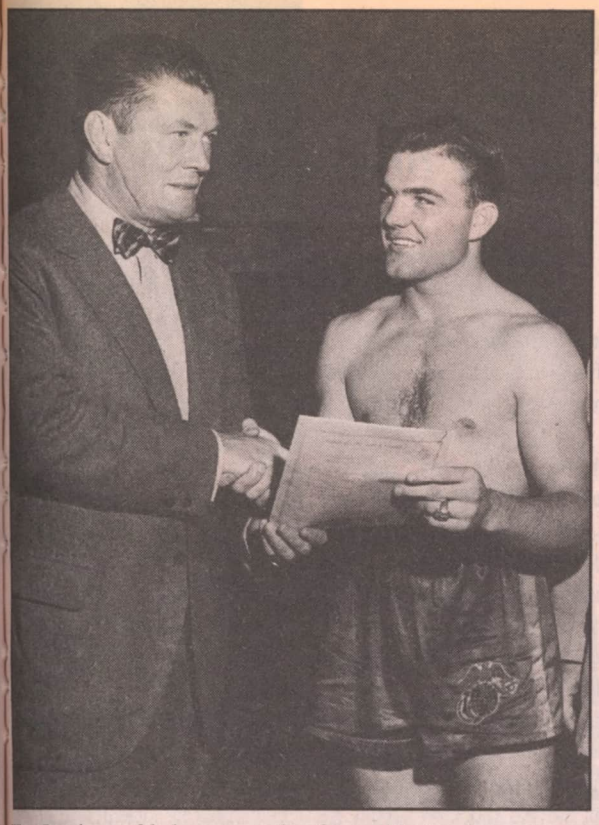
Even one death in boxing is too much if it can be prevented, but we must realize that officials in charge of boxing throughout the world are doing everything humanly possible to prevent what happened to Laverne Roach and those who were injured and killed last year. These deaths and accidents just happen, as do accidents and fatalities in everyday life. Those who are fighting boxing would do well to turn their attention to such mishaps as deaths on the highways, reckless driving that kills thousands annually, and cancer and heart disease.

For every person killed in boxing annually or seriously injured, there are thousands of boys and girls, teenagers, killed or maimed by autos and trucks. Yet we don't find a campaign to eliminate these from our highways! Cancer and heart trouble take the lives of thousands, but we don't seek to stop the birth of children as a means to check future deaths. We seek a preventative, just as we continue to seek preventatives for deaths and accidents in boxing.

Let's be fair, and I address this message particularly to the sports columnists who thrive financially on articles such as "Murder In The Ring," "Boxing Legalized Murder," etc. These fellows hit the jackpot every time a death takes place, not because they honestly believe boxing is "legalized murder," but because they are handsomely paid by those who, through the medium of sensational articles, expect to build up circulation.

***

As my friend Bill Corum, able columnist of the *New York Journal*, so aptly wrote after the death of Roach, "As all of us reasonably acquainted with what goes on in boxing know, New



When Roach was 21, he met another former Marine, former heavyweight champion Gene Tunney, who presented him with an honorary recruiting sergeant's certificate. Roach served during World War II.

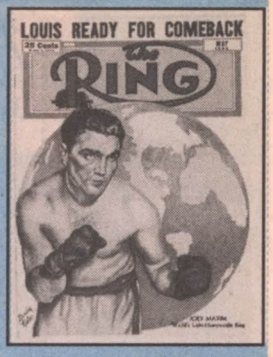
York State is making every effort to provide every possible scientific safeguard. Without contact sports there very well might be a dangerous softening up of our youngsters. That is what happened in the easy money times preceding and during the last war, and there is ample evidence to support the belief.

"However, I don't believe that medical examinations, however scientific, can ever be the whole answer to safety in the ring. Fighters must be taught more carefully and patiently and brought along more slowly as part of any successful program to reduce to a minimum boxing injuries."

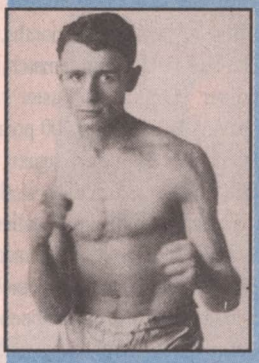
In this I fully agree. We have too many shoemakers and cloakmakers handling young talent instead of efficient managers and trainers. Commissions should cease licensing men without regard to their qualifications in the training or management of boxers or their knowledge of the finer points of boxing. Examinations should be given to those who seek to care for or manage boxers. Only the most efficient should be licensed, and each commission should have a competent judge in the gymnasiums daily to note the condition of the men who are listed to box under their jurisdiction.

Look over the records of our best ring men and you'll find that they not only were good boxers, but could hit. The combination made them what they were. Taking a good wallop and showing heaps of courage just to please the fans is not boxing. The boys should be taught how to defend themselves and how to strike the enemy, and that kind of teaching can be done only by competent instructors. ■

THE RING, May 1950



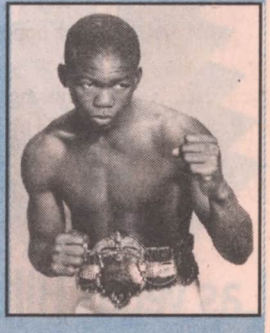
The Cover: Illustrator Stanley Weston draws light heavyweight champion Joey Maxim. After years of mastering his trade, Maxim won the world title in January 1950, stopping Freddie Mills in the 10th round in London. Now he's eying the heavyweight crown.



The Old Garden: Jersey Jones looks back at the "old" Madison Square Garden, which, from 1890 to 1925, hosted dozens of great fights and fighters. In the curtain-closing main event 25 years ago, Sid Terris (pictured) outpointed fellow New Yorker Johnny Dundee.

The Jinx Town: More than one heavyweight hopeful has stumbled in Newark, New Jersey. Jersey Jones recalls some of the bouts that have created "The Newark Jinx." Pictured: Luis Angel Firpo, who was in line for a second title shot when he lost to Charley Weinert in Newark.

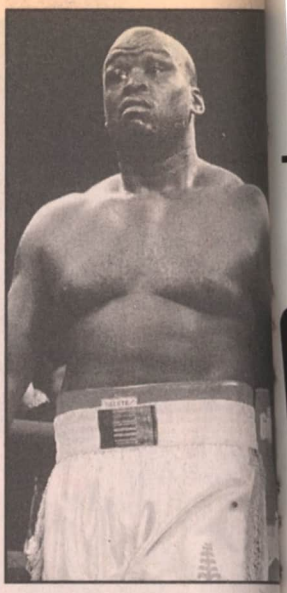
The Busiest Boxers: Sid Feder examines the world champions who fought most often while holding the title. Perhaps the most prolific champ was Maxie Rosenbloom (pictured), who won the crown in 1930. In 1932 and '33, Slapsie Maxie fought no less than 59 times. Among the other busy champs: Abe Attell, Willie Pep, and Freddie Miller.



Fighter Of The Month: The winner is lightweight champ Ike Williams, who, in a pair of non-title bouts, defeated Sonny Boy West and John L. Davis. Also receiving consideration was welter king Sugar Ray Robinson, who, also in non-title affairs, beat Aaron Wade and Jean Walzack.

LOOKING AHEAD

By Steve Farhood



Big Bus: Still too big

BUSTERED

Buster Douglas isn't rated by any of the alphabet organizations, but, until recently, Joe Bugner was. Douglas should take that slight from whence it came. Regardless of his current standing, Big Bus, in the midst of an unusual comeback, is likely to land a big fight sometime in the next few months.

"The winner of the Holyfield-Tyson rematch is the one I'd like to get," said John Russell, Douglas' trainer. "Originally, Buster's motivation was his health. (Three years ago, Douglas, having ballooned to 400 pounds, fell into a diabetic coma.) Now it's personal redemption. He's having fun again, and he sees his skills are still there. He's not happy with how it ended (losing the world title to Holyfield in 1990)."

Before Douglas, 37, can even think of challenging one of the division's elite, he must drop some more weight. And n just for performance sake. The public still remembers the indifferent and poorly conditioned Douglas who was crushed three rounds by Holyfield. In his first three comeback bouts, Douglas scaled 244, 261, and 255, respectively. (As we went press, he was scheduled to face his fourth opponent, Brian Scott, on CBS.) Russell wants his charge to fight at 235 or 2 Douglas, however, doesn't seem particularly concerned about the numbers.

"The weight, where it lands, it lands," he said after outpointing Dickie Ryan in February. "Everyone's looking for a lo to impress people. But there has to be determination, too. No knock on the guy I just fought, but he looked good—and was a little short on talent."

Signing with Top Rank was a good move because promoter Bob Arum has provided Douglas with what he needs most– a steady schedule and headliner status. But according to Douglas, this is no Foremanesque comeback that will extend indef nitely. "I'm gonna give it this year real strong," he said, "and then assess the situation. If it seems it's gonna take anothe year, the hell with it and I'll go back into retirement."

Whether he achieves total redemption or not, Douglas' comeback is already a success. After all, the way he sees it, his return to boxing has saved his life. "If you saw me in 1993," he said, "you would've said, 'No way.' But here I am in 1997, kicking ass."

Chavez: One more title?

LISTEN UP

Strange how things work. **Julio Cesar Chavez** is back with promoter Don King, and as soon as **Oscar De La Hoya** drops the WBC super lightweight title, "J.C. Superstar" will meet countryman **Miguel Angel Gonzalez** to fill the vacancy ... Good news: Both ABC and CBS have 10 boxing shows planned for the '97 season. Additionally, ESPN and ESPN2 have a busy boxing schedule for the second half of the year ... We already knew Albuquerque, New Mexico, wasn't big enough for both **Johnny Tapia** and **Danny Romero**. Apparently, it's not big enough for their fight, either. The long-awaited junior bantamweight showdown has landed in Las Vegas. Similarly, IBF welterweight champion **Felix Trinidad** told THE RING both he and WBC-IBF junior middleweight titlist **Terry Norris** wanted their June clash in New York City. That fight, too, will take place in Vegas. Money talks and promoters listen.

Las Vegas Hilton

FUTURE FIGHTS

By Art Manteris

VP/Director of Race and Sports Operations Las Vegas Hilton SuperBook

Favorite	Underdog	Odds	The Skinny
Mike Tyson	Evander Holyfield	5-2	I've never been more wrong than in the first fight
Lennox Lewis	Henry Akinwande	Pick-'em	Akinwande better now than Frank Bruno ever was
Arturo Gatti	Azumah Nelson	7-5	Gatti may be too fast for great but aging champion
Miguel Angel Gonzalez	Julio Cesar Chavez	3-2	Public might bet Chavez. I say let 'em.
Marco A. Barrera	Junior Jones	7-5	Interesting rematch. Slugfest not likely to go distance

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#CHB-1 (unfilled)....$

★★★★★★★★

RINGSIDE NY BOXING SHO

#LBS (sizes 6-13 -- w
black, red or blue).....$

★★★★★★★★

ULTIMATE BAG GLOVE

#UBG-M.....$
#UBG-L.....$
#UBG-XL.....$

★★★★★★★★

MasterCard
VISA
DISCOVER